

AL-WALA WAL-BARA

ACCORDING TO THE AQEEDAH OF THE SALAF

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Mohammad al-Qahtani

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Al-Wala' wa'l-Bara'

According to the Aqeedah of the Salaf

Part 1

(With slight modification)

By Shaykh Muhammad Saeed al-Qahtani

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Author's Note

This book was originally submitted in the form of a thesis for a Master's Degree to the Department of Aqeedah of the Umm al-Qorah University in Makka, 'Saudi' Arabia.

The examining committee comprised the following: Muhammad Qutb, the supervisor, as chairman; Shaykh Abdur Razzaq Afifi as a member; and Dr. Abdul Azeez Obeid as a member.

The author was granted a Master's Degree, with excellence, on Saturday evening, the 4th of Shaban 1401.

I am grateful to Shaykh Abdur Razzaq Afifi for writing the Foreword to this book.

Thank you.

Muhammad Saeed al-Qahtani
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Publisher's Note

Thanks are also due to Omar Johnstone for translating the book into English, to Ahmad Thomson for editing and typesetting the text and compiling the Glossary, and to Yusuf Islam for both his moral and financial support in its publication.

It is impossible to provide a literal translation in English of the words al-wala' wa'l-bara', but the meaning of this Arabic term indicated, on the one hand, drawing near to what is pleasing to Allah and His Messenger and, on the other hand, withdrawing from what is displeasing to Allah and His Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace.

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Foreword

In the Name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate

Praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds, and may the blessings and peace of Allah be on our Prophet Muhammad and on his family and on all his companions.

The subject matter of this work is of paramount importance and utmost interest for two major reasons:

Firstly, it is concerned with one of Islam's main foundations, namely the qualities of al-wala' wa'1-bara', which are two major prerequisites of true faith: al-wala' is a manifestation of sincere love for Allah, His prophets and the believers; al-bara', on the other hand, is an expression of enmity and hatred towards falsehood and its adherents. Both are evidence of iman.

Secondly, it has been written at a very crucial time: everything has become so mixed up that some Muslims are no longer aware of those qualities which distinguish the believers from the non-believers; their faith has become so weak that they have adopted patterns of behaviour that are absolutely repugnant to a sincere believer; they have taken the disbelievers as their friends, while displaying enmity towards many of the believers by disparaging their character and degrading them.

The importance of writing such a book as this in the present time is therefore apparent.

The author has investigated the various aspects of al-wala' wa'1-bara', quoting, along with explanatory notes and comments, many scholars' statements and arguments. He has also backed up his arguments with numerous verses from the Qur'an, authentic traditions from the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace and many of the sayings of his companions and the early pious Muslim scholars, may Allah be pleased with all of them. The author has also verified the reliability of these sources, recording the numbers of the Qur'anic verses and the chapters in which they are to be found, and the books in which the prophetic traditions and sayings are contained, as well as the degree of their authenticity.

The author's grasp of his subject, his immense erudition and the thoroughness of his research, are all clearly apparent in this work.

I pray that this book will benefit the Muslims. I also pray that Allah the Almighty will provide our Ummah with writers who will follow in the footsteps of its author. There is great hope that the younger generation of Muslims will be brought up to honour the deen of Islam and to revive those parts of it that have

been obliterated, for my Lord and your Lord is the Hearer and Answerer of our prayers.

Shaykh Abdar-Razaq Afifi

(His Eminence Shaykh Abdar-Razaq Afifi is Deputy-President of the Departments of Guidance, Ifta, Call and Scholarly Research in Saudi Arabia; he is also a member of the Board of Great Ulama' of Saudi Arabia.)

Preface to First Edition

In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

All praise is due to Allah. We praise Him and seek His assistance. We ask for His forgiveness and take refuge in Him from the evil within ourselves and from the evil of our deeds. He whom Allah guides will never be diverted yet whomever He sends astray will never find his way. I bear witness that there is no God but Allah, Alone, He has no partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger, may the blessing of Allah be upon him, his Family, his Companions, and upon those who followed his guidance.

Allah has bestowed upon us His Mercy and Kindness by sending His Messenger Muhammad and His Message as the final heavenly message. He has sent this Message pure and complete. No one, except the deviated people, could be diverted from it. He has promised happiness in this world and in the Hereafter for the followers of His Shari'ah; those who have fully appreciated its value and devoted themselves to convey it in accordance with Allah's Wishes and the guidance of His Messenger. Allah has called them His friends and party. He has also promised misery and degradation for those who have deviated from His Shari'ah and His Right path. He has called them the friends and party of Satan.

The foundation of this eternal Message is the affirmation of Tawhid, **There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.** Ibn al-Qayyim said that the Word of Tawhid is the reason for which: **Balances of Justice are set up, records of deeds are registered, the day of Paradise and Hell is appointed, creatures are divided into believers and disbelievers, pious and evildoers, the religion of Islam is established and swords are unsheathed for Jihad.** The Word of Tawhid is Allah's right over all His creatures.

The reality of this Word consists of: The knowledge of what the Prophet has brought, belief of the heart, confirmation of the tongue, obedience with love and submission, its practice inwardly and outwardly, its application and the call of other people to it according to one's ability. Its perfection is the love for Allah's sake and hate for His sake, offer and prevent for His sake, and that Allah, alone, should be one's God and Lord.

The way to achieve Tawhid is: The full following of the Prophet, inwardly and outwardly, and the restraint of the heart from pursuing other than Allah and His Messenger.[1]

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[1] Ibn al-Qayyim, 'Al-Fawa'id, revised by Jabir Yussef, p.143.

This great Word (Tawhid), with all the meanings and requirements it entails, has been absent in people's life, except a few. One of the most important subject of these requirements is the doctrine of Al-Wala' Wal Bara.

However, although this crucial principle of faith has vanished from people's life, it does not change a thing about its plain reality. The doctrine of al-Wala' Wal Bara' is the real image for the actual practice of this faith. It has a tremendous significance in the mind of the Muslim, as much as the greatness and significance of the faith. Therefore, Tawhid will never be achieved on earth until we apply the doctrine of al-Wala' Wal Bara'. Some people think that the principle of faith is a matter of secondary importance, but in reality it is the opposite.

It is a matter of belief and disbelief, as Allah says:

> **"O You who believe! Do not take your fathers or your brothers as protectors if they prefer disbelief to faith. Whoever among you takes them for protectors will only be wrongdoers. Say, If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your kinsmen, the wealth which you have acquired, the commerce in which you fear a decline, or the houses you love - if these are dearer to you than Allah and His Messenger, and striving hard and fighting in His cause, then wait until Allah brings about His Decision (torment). Allah does not guide those who are Al-Faasiqun."** (Surat at-Tawbah: Verses 23 - 24)

Allah says:

> **"O you who believe! Take not the Jews and the Christians as Awliya' (friends, protectors), they are but Awliya' to one another. And if any amongst you takes them as Awliya', then surely he is one of them. Verily, Allah guides not those people who are the Zaalimun (polytheists, wrong-doers)"** (Surat al-Ma'idah: Verse 51)

Sheikh Hamad Ben Ateeq, may Allah have mercy upon him, has said:

"In the Book of Allah (Qur'an) there is no ruling more apparent and significant than the ruling of al-Wala' Wal Bara', after the requirement of Tawhid and the prohibition of its opposite"[2]

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[2] An-Najaat wal-Fakak, p.14.

The Muslim Ummah had led humanity for centuries. It disseminated Islam throughout the world, and liberated people from the worship of other people to the worship of the Lord of people, and from oppression to freedom.

What has happened after that?

• The Muslim Ummah has fallen behind, after it abandoned Jihad, which is the top of Islam, and followed pleasures of the world.

• It imitates other nations and become engrossed in luxuries and comfort.

• Its thoughts have been confused because it mixed up the pure principles of Islam with heresy of human beings and philosophies of Jahiliyyah.

• It has obeyed the disbelievers and preferred worldly gains to its religion (Islam), but it lost both this world and the Hereafter.

Aspects of association are manifested in different matters:

1. Loving, honouring and helping the disbelievers against the Muslims, and removing the shari'ah of Allah and stigmatising Islam and the Muslims as reactionaries, fossils and relics of a former age, left behind by the march of history.

2. Importing laws of the disbelievers and forcing them on Muslims against their wills, and calling any Muslim, who wants Allah's Shari'ah to be implemented, an extremists and a reactionary.

3. Casting doubt about the Sunnah of the Prophet, attacking its records and disparaging the scholars who devoted their lives for the protection of the Hadith of the Prophet.

4. Calling for the new religion of Jahiliyyah which is considered a new apostasy in the Muslims' life, like Turanian Nationalism, Arab Nationalism, Indian Nationalism, etc.

5. Corrupting Muslim society by means of education, media and instilling western thoughts and ways of life into the minds of Muslims.

Therefore, facing all these aspects, a lot of questions are raised and need to be answered according to the Book of Allah, the Sunnah of His Messenger and the scholars. Among these questions:

- What is a Muslim?
- Who should he associate himself with?
- Who should he disassociate himself from?
- What is the ruling of those who ally with the disbelievers?

- What is the ruling of Islam with regard to the intellectual ideologies adopted by some people from our Ummah who speak our language and spread these ideologies?
- How can we ally and help the Muslims who are oppressed and killed all over the world today by the disbelievers and the powers of evil?
- What is the way for salvation from the materialistic slavery of the West?

These issues are raised because the real meaning and application of Tawhid is absent from everyday life of Muslims. It is so distorted that so many people think that the confirmation of Rububiyyah (Unity of Lordship) is enough for them to become Muwahhidun, without having to confirm Uluhiyyah (Unity of Worship).

Real Tawhid consists of the Unity of Lordship and Unity of Worship, it is part of the doctrine of Wala' and Bara'. May Allah have mercy upon Sheikh Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahhab who said:

> "Islam of a man can never be accepted, even if he abandons polytheism, unless he shows enmity towards the disbelievers and polytheists, as Allah says in Surat al-Muja'dilah, verse: 22,
>
> > **"You will not find any people who believe in Allah and the Last Day, making friendship with those who oppose Allah and His Messenger, even though they were their fathers, or their sons, or their brothers, or their kindred (people)""**[3]

Therefore, putting in my mind all these issues and determining to serve Islam, and exposing evil and unveiling the truth, I have decided to write this book which I named, Al-Wala' Wal Bara' In Islam, knowing, before hand, that I cannot fully cover all aspects of the subject, because of the lack of materials. However, I did my best to reach a satisfying result by Allah's Help.

Finally, I would like to thank my teacher Sheikh Muhammad Qutb for his advice and guidance in completing this work.

Our Lord! Do not punish us if we forget or fall into error, our Lord! Lay not on us such a burden as You did lay on those before us; our Lord! Impose not on us that which we have not the strength to bear. Pardon us, grant us

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[3] Majmuat at-Tawhid, p.19

forgiveness, and have mercy on us. You are our Protector, and give us victory over the disbelieving people.

Muhammad Ibn Saeed Ibn Saalim Al-Qahtaani
Makkah Al-Mukarramah
15/05/1402 A.M.

Chapter 1
Introduction

Nature of Islam

In order to approach the subject of al-wala' wa'l-bara' from a correct Islamic perspective we should consider three fundamental points: firstly, the essence of Islam is contained in the words '**There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah**'; secondly, al-wala' wa'1-bara' are essential elements relating to this declaration of faith; and thirdly, shirk, hypocrisy, apostasy and disbelief all contradict this declaration of faith.

Our intention is to attempt to provide a working definition of Islam and of whatever contradicts it. We will discuss the principles of al-wala' wa'1-bara' and the role that they play in the lives of the Muslims. Al-wala' wa'1-bara' are part of 'aqeedah, so our discussion must also consider its basis, that is the nature of Divine Unity, or Tawheed. A correct understanding of this is necessary in order to enable us to choose our friends and identify our enemies in an informed and correct manner. It would be absurd to imagine that our 'aqeedah did not offer us guidance in this respect. We will likewise consider the mission of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and the impact it had on the course of human history; how as a result of his call a great civilisation was born which elevated all Muslims in stature only because they declared their belief in their Lord, in their deen and in their Prophet. It is worth remembering that this call was raised at a time when humanity was in deepest ignorance and most profound error, and that they were awakened by it and brought back from death:

> **"Is he who was dead and We have raised him to life, and set for him a light in which he walks among men, the same as he who is in utter darkness from which he cannot emerge?"** (6:122)

Miqdad ibn al-Aswad[4] describes the conditions under which the Sahaba were living at this time in this account related by Abu Na'im in al-Hilyyah:

> "By Allah, none of the previous prophets was sent into more difficult conditions than the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. His was a time of profound weakness and ignorance when

[4] One of the early converts to Islam. He was a cavalryman at Badr and died in 33 AH. Some have said that he was seventy when he lived in a place called Jarf about three miles from Madinah, where he was taken to be buried.

people could not have imagined the existence of a religion better than that of the worship of idols.

'The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, came with the means to sever truth from falsehood, and to sever a father from his son; for when a man whose heart Allah had filled with faith saw that his father, son or brother were disbelievers, he would find no pleasure in seeing them, knowing that whoever enters the Fire will be destroyed. This is why Allah says:

> **"Our Lord! Grant us the comfort of our wives and of our offspring.""** (25:74)[5]

Allah describes the nature of this Ignorance in the Qur'an while at the same time reminding the Muslims of His having guided them to the right path:

> **"And hold fast, all of you together, to the rope of Allah, and do not separate. And remember Allah's favour to you: how you were enemies and He made friendship between your hearts so that you became like brothers by His grace; and (how) you were upon the brink of an abyss of fire, and He saved you from it. Thus Allah makes clear His signs to you, that perhaps you may be guided."** (3:103)

Sayid Qutb says:

> "When the Sahaba were shown the meaning of Ignorance and then that of Islam, they abandoned ignorance completely. This was the effect that the formative influence of the Qur'an and their personal contact with the Prophet had on them. They were the greatest generation in the history of this mission. What was the secret of this grandeur about which we have all heard and read so much? Their legendary stature seems dreamlike compared to the abysmal depths to which we have now sunk. These people threw out everything from the Ignorance of the past when they entered Islam. They had embarked on an epic journey, leaving behind them a short-sighted, feeble minded world - a world filled with oppression, humiliation and the worship of money - for a life full of

[5] Abu Na'im, Hilyyat al-'Awliyaah', 1/175. It is also mentioned in Hayyat as-Sahabah , 1/241. I have also heard that at-Tabarani mentions two very similar reports, one of which contains Yahya b. Saalih in its isnad. Ath-Thahabi confirms this, discusses it and says that its reporters are all reliable, or sahih. This is what al-Haythami has said in his Majmau' az-Zawaa'id, 6/17.

possibilities, shining with the light of Allah; for a world of profound insight and vision that gave men the confidence to rise above the worship of created things and to worship only Allah."[6]

Declaration of Faith and the Key to Success

The declaration of faith, '**There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah**', is the key to success and the point of departure from which the Prophet began, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. These words broke all bonds and severed all ties except those of faith, of love for the sake of Allah, and of brotherhood in His cause: ties that transcend all considerations of race, class, nationality, caste and colour.

Imam Muslim reports from Abu Hurayrah that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said:

> "Allah will say on the Day of Resurrection, "Where are those who love each other only for my sake? Today they will take shelter in My shadow and there is no other shadow today but Mine.""[7]

Umar ibn al-Khattab reports that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said,

> **"Indeed among the servants of Allah are people who are neither prophets nor martyrs themselves but whose place both prophets and martyrs will envy on that Day."** Those who were with him asked, *"O Messenger of Allah, tell us who they are."* He said, **"They are those who loved each other for the sake of Allah though there was no bond of kinship between them and no thought of gain. By Allah, their faces shine with light. They are bathed in light. When men take fright they fear not. When men are struck with sadness they feel no sorrow."** Then he read the verse,
>
> > **"Most surely the friends of Allah are (those) who have no fear and who do not grieve."** (10:62).

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[6] Sayid Qutb, Milestones, p. 16, Arabic Edition, Shorouk

[7] Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Burj, (2566); also Musnad, Imam Ahmad, 16/192, (8436); and al-Muwatta, Imam Malik, 2/952.

The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, stayed in Makkah for thirteen years calling people to this 'aqeedah and planting it firmly in the hearts of the Muslim community until its effects began to be reflected in their actions and in their unceasing struggle to spread the word of Allah throughout the world. It was also to serve as the foundation of the nation established by the Prophet at Madinah.

The Task before Us

There is an urgent need to speak about this issue again, and to repeat the correct Islamic understanding of it, now that many people have come to misunderstand the pure 'aqeedah that the Messenger of Allah brought us. For the great mass of people today the declaration of faith is little more than an empty phrase. They do not reflect on its meaning, consider its significance or sense any of the commitment that it entails. Worse still, the problem is not only confined to the meaning of the kalima, but also extends to the Qur'an and the Sunnah too, as people skim through these to find support for their own opinions while ignoring the work of the ulama, the commentaries on the hadith, and the tafsir of the Qur'an. Such people think they have no need of scholars, past or present.

The reality of worship as a vast matter encompassing the life of this world and the Hereafter has thus been altered to include only the ritual acts of devotion: the prayer and fasting, zakat and the hajj. But where is the complete way of life? Whom shall we choose as friends? Who are our enemies? Whom shall we love? Whom shall we hate? The answers to these questions are very far from their grasp. This deen does not stop at simply saying that God is One, but continues by asserting that there is no other divinity than He; the totality of His Divine Names and Attributes alone befit His Grandeur and Majesty.

As Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab has pointed out,

> “When the Prophet went to the People of the Book to warn them about associating other things with Allah, and to urge them to accept that this practice stood in contradiction to the Divine Unity of God, they were not opposed to him. They started to mend their ways and to encourage one another to accept his call. But when their religion and the foolishness of their scholars were denounced, they turned away and declared their enmity towards him and his companions, complaining, "He questions our intelligence, defames our religion, and insults our faith." Of course, it is well known that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace,

never cursed Jesus nor his mother, peace be on them, nor the angels nor the pious dead. But when he explained that these could not help them and could not hurt them, they claimed it was an insult.
'Once we understand this point we will realize that no one has the right to say he is a Muslim, even if he says there is only One God, unless he also declares his enmity for the disbelievers and makes plain his anger with them and opposition to them:

> **"You will not find people who believe in Allah and the Last Day loving those who oppose Allah and His Messenger, even though they are their fathers or their sons or their brothers or their clan. As for such, He has written faith upon their hearts."** (58:22).

'If we understand this then we must also recognize that many of those who claim to be Muslims today really have no idea about the meaning of the words "There is no god but Allah". Were we to accept their understanding, then we could not explain the first Muslims' perseverance when under torture and in slavery, nor their patience during persecution and exile. The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, was the most merciful of men; had he been able to spare his Companions these hardships then surely he would have done so."[8]

Bearing in mind the misunderstanding over the true meaning of the words 'There is no god but Allah,' it is perhaps relevant to discuss this point further. In the following chapter we will consider the things which contradict the declaration of faith, and the obligations that its acceptance implies. We rely upon Allah for help and inspiration in this task.

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[8] Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab, Majmu'at at-Tawhid, p.19. Also Ibn Taimiyah and others.

Chapter 2
The Declaration of Faith

What the Declaration of Faith Confirms and What it Denies

The meaning of the first part of the declaration of faith, 'There is no god but Allah', is that nothing other than Allah is worthy of worship. This denies the attribution of divinity to all other things, and affirms it as a quality which belongs to Allah alone.[9] Ibn Taymiyah said:

> "The heart will not find complete happiness except by loving Allah and by striving towards what is dear to Him. It is not possible to achieve this love except by rejecting all things that compete with it. This is what the words, "There is no god but Allah", mean; this is the spirit of the deen of Ibrahim and of that of every other prophet."[10]

When someone says, '**There is no god but Allah**', he has denied one thing and affirmed another. With these words the believer first denies all those who reject faith, worship created things, obey the tyrant, rule by injustice or remain content under oppression; and then he affirms his allegiance to Allah, to His deen, to His Book, to His righteous servants, and to the Sunnah of His Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace:

> **"Whoever rejects false deities and believes in Allah has grasped a firm handhold which will never break."** (2:256).[11]

As for the second part of the declaration, '**Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah**', this means that we do what the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, has told us to do, and stop doing what he has told us not to do.

According to Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab

"No one truly believes until he rejects the forces of disbelief[12]."

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[9] Sheikh Abar-Rahman ibn Hassan, Path al Majid, p. 36.
[10] Ibn Taimiya, Majmu' al-Fatawaa, vol 28, p.32. Riyadh.
[11] Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab, Fath al-Majid, p.16.
[12] The word translated here as 'forces of disbelief' is 'Taghut' in the original Arabic. Ibn al-Qayyim says that this means anything which exceeds Allah's limits, something that is served, obeyed or followed. Taghut includes everyone who rules by other than the revelation of Allah and the example of His Messenger; or which is worshipped instead of, or in addition to, Allah; or which

This is supported by ayah 2:256 just cited. The declaration of faith is a declaration of complete loyalty to the Shari'ah:

> **“Follow that which is sent down to you from your Lord, and follow no protecting friends beside Him. Little do you recollect!”** (7:3)

and:

> **“So set your purpose (O Muhammad) for the deen as a man by nature upright - the natural way of Allah, in which He has created man.”** (30:30)

You must also denounce the rule of Ignorance:

> **Is it a judgement of the time of ignorance that they seek? And who is better than Allah for judgment for a people who have certainty (in their belief)?** (5:50)

Indeed you must deny all other religions:

> **“And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will not be accepted from him, and he will be one of the losers in the Hereafter.”** (3:85)[13]

The declaration of faith is thus a denial and an affirmation. In fact, it denies four things and affirms four others. It denies false deities, the tyrant, intermediaries, and ordained authorities, who are bogus. If you think a thing can help you or protect you from harm then you have taken it as a god. A tyrant demands that you worship and adore him. An intermediary, whether family, community or property, distracts you from faith:

> **“And from among mankind are some who take for themselves (objects of worship as) rivals to Allah, loving them as they should only love Allah.”** (2:165)

Bogus authority advises you to act against truth and to disobey Allah:

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is followed in opposition to the command of Allah. Quoted from Abd ar-Rahman ibn Hassan, Fath al-Majid, p. 16.

[13] Pickthall: '...whoso seeketh as religion other than the Surrender (to Allah).'

“They have taken as lords beside Allah their rabbis and their monks.” (9:31)

It also affirms four things: that the object of your worship is Allah; that glorification and love are for Allah alone; that hope and fear are due only to Allah; and that you are aware of Allah's power and might, this awareness is Taqwa. The single and unique goal of the believer is to worship Allah and none other than Him. Thus, the believer's love is for Allah alone:

“And those who believe are stronger in their love for Allah.” (2:165)

Hope too, is placed exclusively in Allah and one fears nothing but Him:

‘If Allah afflicts you with some hurt, there is no one who can remove it except Him; and if He desires good for you, there is no one who can repel His bounty. He strikes with it whom He wishes of his servants. He is the Forgiving, the Compassionate.” (10:107)[14]

Lastly, the believer is conscious of Allah and aware of the danger of His displeasure and of His wrath. It is taqwa that causes a person to abandon disbelief and disobedience, to devote himself entirely to Allah and to obey His law and His command. Ibn Mas'ood said:

“When you act in obedience to Allah, in the light of Allah, you hope for Allah's reward. When you abandon disobedience of Allah, in the light of Allah, you fear Allah's punishment.”[15]

Whoever recognizes these things must sever all links to anything other than Allah and free his heart from falsehood. Thus Allah tells us that Ibrahim, as well as our own Prophet, may the blessings and peace of Allah be on them, smashed the idols that their people took as gods and rejected all who worshipped them:

“There is a good example for you in Ibrahim and those with him, when they told their people: Surely we disassociate ourselves from you and all that you worship beside Allah. We have done with you. And there

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[14] Pickthall: '...the Forgiving, the Merciful.'

[15] Majmu'at ar-Rasa'il wa'1-Masa'il al-Najdiyya, Muhammad Rashid Rida, eds. vol.4, p.99.

has arisen between us and you enmity and hate for ever until you believe in Allah only.” (60:4)[16]

From beginning to end the Qur'an is a clarification of the meaning of the words, '**There is no god but Allah**'. This statement is both a denial of shirk and of those who commit it, and an approval of sincerity and of those who strive for it. Every word and every deed that is dear to Allah is in some way connected to this declaration. It is the source of all noble action, its definition and its guide.[17] This is why Allah has called it, the 'declaration of fear.'[18]

The Prophet's Companions and the Declaration of Faith

The following account illustrates the Companions' understanding and experience of the kalima. In 170 AH someone asked Imam Sufiyan ibn 'Uyaynah al-Hillali[19] about faith. He said:

"It is in both speech and action."
"But does it increase and decrease?" asked the man.
"It increases as Allah wishes, and it decreases as He wishes until no more of it than this remains," and he held out his hand.
The man said, "So what should be our attitude towards those among us who assert that it is speech and not action?"
"This is what people used to say before the nature and limits of faith had been made clear. Of course Allah, Glorious and Mighty is He, sent his Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, to all of humanity to tell them that there is no god but Allah and that he is the Messenger of Allah. Once they had accepted this, the security of their money and their lives was assured and they became accountable to Allah alone."

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[16] Risa'il fi 'Aqa'id al-Islam, Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab, eds. Rashid Rida, p.35.
[17] ibid.
[18] Ar. Kalimat at-Taqwa : Wa 'alzamahum kalimat at-taqwaa wa kaanu 'ahaqqa bihaa wa 'ahlahaa. (Qur'an 48:26): '**And imposed upon them the word of self-restraint, for they were worthy of it and meet for it.**' (Pickthall). Muhammad Asad translates this term as 'the word of God-consciousness' and notes that it implies that 'their consciousness of God and of His all-pervading power enabled them to bear the "stubborn disdain" of their enemies with inner calm and sincerity.' (Asad, The Message of the Quran, p.790, Gibralter, 1980). Its translation as 'fear' above is most appropriate due to the context of al-Qahtani's discussion.
[19] 107-198 AH; Imam Shafi'i said of him, 'Were it not for Imams Malik and ibn 'Uyaynah, the learning of the Hijaz would have been lost.' Imam Ahmad said, 'I have not seen anyone more knowledgeable in the Sunnah than ibn 'Uyaynah.'

"When Allah was satisfied with their sincerity, He commanded His Prophet to order them to pray. He ordered them to do this and they did it. By Allah, if they had not done this their first act would not have helped them".[20]

"When Allah was satisfied with the sincerity of their prayers, He told His Prophet to order them to migrate to Madeenah. By Allah, if they had not done this neither their first act nor their prayers would have helped them."

"When Allah was satisfied with the sincerity of their hearts in this, He commanded them to return to Makkah to fight their fathers and their brothers until these said the Word which they had said, established the same prayer and joined the same migration. He commanded them to do this and they did it. One of them even came with the head of his father and said, 'O Messenger of Allah, here is the head of a leader of the disbelievers.' By Allah, if they had not done this their first act, their prayers and their migration would not have helped them."

"When Allah was satisfied with the sincerity of their hearts in this, He told His Messenger to order them to complete the rite of Tawwaf and to shave their heads in humility, which they did. By Allah, if they had not done this their first act, their prayers, their migration and their combat with their fathers would not have helped them."

"When Allah was satisfied with the sincerity of their hearts in this He told the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, to take a part of their money by which to purify themselves. He commanded them to do this and they did, giving much and giving little. By Allah, if they had not done this their first act, their prayers, their migration, their combat with their fathers and their tawwaf would not have helped them."

"When Allah was satisfied with the sincerity of their hearts which were now in harmony with the nature and limits of faith, He said to them:

> **"This day I have perfected your deen for you and have completed My blessings to you, and have chosen for you as your deen al-Islam."** (5:3)

'Imam Sufiyan continued:

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[20] There is an inconsistency in the account here. The text says 'If they had not done this neither their first act nor their prayers would have helped them.' As Shaykh al-Qahtani points out in a footnote, this wording is odd. Logically it should say 'had they not done this their first act would not have helped them.' This alternative is more clear and has been used above. The discrepancy is probably due to a scribe's error. (Trans).

"Whoever abandoned any part of faith was a disbeliever as far as we were concerned. If this was from neglect we would correct him, but he would be lacking in our eyes. This is the Sunnah. Relate it on my behalf to whoever may ask you about it."[21]

[21] Al-Shari'a, Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn al-Hussain al-Ajari, p.104

Chapter 3
The Prerequisites of the Declaration of Faith

The importance of the declaration of faith has nothing to do with the number of its words, nor indeed with its memorisation. How many people have acknowledged it and lived according to it yet still could not tell you how many words it contains? How many people have learned these words by heart to rattle them off as quick as lightning, but still fall into many things that contradict them? Success is only by the hand of Allah.[22]

In the first century of the Hijra someone asked Wahab ibn Munabbah whether the words, '**There is no god but Allah**', were the key to paradise. 'Certainly,' he said, 'but of course every key has teeth, so if you come with one that has teeth, the door will open, but if you don't, it won't.'[23] The teeth of this key are the prerequisites of the declaration of faith.

The ulama' consider that the declaration of faith depends on seven conditions:

The first of these prerequisites is knowledge of what the declaration of faith negates and of what it confirms. It negates ignorance. Allah says:

> **"So know (O Muhammad) that there is no god but Allah."** (47:19)

and also:

> **"Except whoever bears witness to the truth knowingly."** (43:86)

This witnessed truth is Tawheed, or Divine Unity, which pervades the heart as you declare the kalima; and lastly:

> **"Allah (Himself) is Witness that there is no god but Him - and (so are) the angels and the people of knowledge -Who sustains His creation with justice; there is no god but Him, the Almighty, the Wise."** (3:18).

In Sahih Bukhari, as in Sahih Muslim, there is a hadith, reported by Uthman, that says:

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[22] Ma'aarij al-Qubul, Hafiz al-Hakami, 1/377.

[23] He reported hadith from Abu Hurayrah, Abu Sa'id, Ibn Abbas and Ibn Umar among others. He came from Yemen and died in 110 AH. This hadith is reported in Bukhari, in an appendix to Kitab al-Jana'iz with regard to someone whose last words are, 'There is no god but Allah', 3/109.

“The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, **"Whoever dies in the knowledge that there is no god but Allah, shall surely enter Paradise"**'.[24]

The second prerequisite is the complete denial of uncertainty. This means that whoever pronounces the declaration of faith must be completely and utterly sure that it is the truth. Faith must be based upon certainty and not upon doubt[25]. Allah says:

“Surely the (true) believers are only those who believe in Allah and His Messenger and then do not doubt, but struggle with their wealth and their selves in the way of Allah. These are the sincere.” (49:15).

Abu Hurayrah has reported:

'The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, **"I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, and that I am the Messenger of Allah. No one will come to Allah with these words, never doubting any of it, without entering paradise. "**[26]

Another report says,

"None will come to Allah with these words, never doubting any of it, and not see paradise"

In another hadith, also reported by Abu Hurayrah, the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, says,

"Whoever you find beyond this room, who bears witness with firmness in his heart that there is no god but Allah, give him glad tidings of paradise."[27]

According to al-Qurtubi, simply pronouncing the declaration of faith is not enough; you must also be certain of it in your heart. This contradicts the doctrine of the extremist Murji'a sect who say that by simply saying these words

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[24] ibid. 1/378. See also Al-Jam' al-Fareed, p.356.
[25] ibid. 1/378.
[26] Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Iman, 1/56, (27)
[27] Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Iman, 1/60, (31).

you have established an adequate foundation for faith. Their own arguments contradict one another. In fact, this position is known to destroy whoever supports it, because it requires him to condone hypocrisy and to ascribe true faith to hypocrites and this is a negation of faith.'[28]

The third prerequisite is to accept inwardly, and to declare openly, whatever the declaration of faith requires. Allah tells us that some of those who came before accepted it and and knew success, while others rejected it and invited His wrath:

> **“And even so We sent not a warner before you (O Muhammad) into any township but that its luxurious ones said: 'Surely we found our fathers following a religion, and we are following in their footsteps.' (And the warner) said: 'What! Even though I bring you better guidance than what you found your fathers following?' They answered: 'Surely we are disbelievers in what you bring.' So we requited them. Then see the nature of the consequence for the rejecters!”** (43:23-25).

And He says:

> **“Then shall We save Our Messengers and those who believe in the same way (as before). It is incumbent upon Us to save the believers.”** (10:103)

and also:

> **“For when it was said to them, 'There is no god but Allah,' they were scornful, and said: 'Shall we forsake our gods for a mad poet?'”** (37:35-36).

The fourth prerequisite is to abandon oneself to what the declaration of faith implies, namely, complete surrender to Allah:

> **“Turn to your Lord repentant, and surrender to Him.**” (39:54)

and:

> **“Who is better in religion than he who surrenders his purpose to Allah while doing good?”** (4:125)

[28] Shaykh Abdar-Rahman ibn Hasan, Fath al-Majid, p.36.

and:

> **"Whoever surrenders his purpose to Allah while doing good, he has truly grasped the firm handhold."** (31:22).

The '**firm handhold**' means to completely understand and accept the declaration of faith. In the words of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace,

> **"None of you has believed until his desires are in accordance with what I have come to you with."**[29]

This refers to the perfection of your obedience and of your desire to obey. Furthermore, Allah says:

> **"But no, by your Lord, they will not believe (truly) until they make you the judge of what is in dispute between them, and find within themselves no dislike of what you decide, and submit with full submission."** (4:65).

Ibn Kathir points out that in this ayah Allah makes an oath upon Himself and swears that no one has believed until he accepts the authority of the Prophet in all matters. This is the truth that the believer must apply to himself both in public and in private. This is why He says in the ayah:

> **"and find within themselves no dislike of what you decide, and submit with full submission"**

That is, 'they accept your judgement in their hearts and find no difficulty in themselves in following what you have decided.' Thus they submit to it completely, with no pressure or coercion, and without argument. This point was made again when the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said,

> **"By He in Whose hand is my soul, none of you has believed until his desires are in accord with what I have come to you with."**[30]

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[29] This hadith appears in Imam Nawawi's Forty Hadith, number 41.

[30] Ibn Kathir, Tafsir, 2/306

The fifth prerequisite is to denounce falsehood sincerely, doing this with heartfelt conviction, so that the tongue follows the heart. Allah says:

> **"Alif. Lam. Mim. Do people imagine that they will be left (at ease) because they say, 'We believe', and will not be tested with affliction? Surely We tested those who were before you. Thus Allah certainly knows those who are sincere, and He certainly knows those who lie.** "(29:1-3).
>
> And He says:
>
> **"And of mankind are some who say: 'We believe in Allah and in the Last Day,' when they believe not. They think they are tricking Allah and those who believe, but they trick no one except themselves; but they do not perceive this. In their hearts is a disease and Allah increases their disease. A painful punishment is theirs because they lie.**" (2:8-10).

In a sahih hadith, Mu'aadh ibn Jabal reports that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said,

> **"No one will say, "There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah", sincerely from his heart without Allah forbidding him the Fire."**[31]

Ibn al-Qayim remarks that sincerity with regard to the words, '**There is no god but Allah**', must depend on your compliance with, and acceptance of, the obligations which this statement places upon you. These obligations are represented by the Shari'ah, which itself is an elaboration of the declaration of faith. It means that you believe in whatever Allah has revealed, that you follow His commandments and avoid what He has forbidden. One who is truly sincere in this belief will abide by it completely. The complete protection of the Shari'ah is only assured by complete compliance with it. Likewise, complete security from punishment only comes from complete obedience to it.[32]

The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said,

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[31] Sahih Bukhari and Muslim.

[32] lbn Qayim al-Jawziya, at-Tibyan fi Aqsam al-Qur'an, p.43.

“My intercession is for whoever bears witness that there is no god but Allah sincerely, whose heart believes his tongue, and whose tongue believes his heart.”[33]

Ibn Rajab adds:

“As for those who give lip service to the words, "**There is no god but Allah**", but then follow Satan in disobedience and contentiousness, their actions have made clear the emptiness of their words and the weakness of their belief:

“And who goes farther astray than he who follows his desires without guidance from Allah?” (28:50)

and:

“Do not follow desire so that it lures you away from the way of Allah.” (38:26).’[34]

The sixth prerequisite is singularity of devotion. This means that you should purify your deeds by cleansing your intentions of all traces of reverence towards any created thing:

“Surely pure religion is for Allah only.” (39:3)

and also:

“And they are not ordered to anything else other than to worship Allah, keeping the deen pure for Him, as men by nature upright.” (98:5).

Abu Hurayrah reports that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said,

'**Allah raises up by my intercession whoever says, "There is no god but Allah", from the depths of his heart with complete purity of devotion.**'[35]

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[33] Al-Hakim, al-Mustadrak, 1/70; he said that its isnad was sahih, and ad-Dhahabi confirmed him in this.
[34] Imam ibn Rajab, Kalimat al-Ikhlaas, p.28.
[35] Sahih Bukhari, Kitab al-'Ilm, 1/193, (99).

The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, is reported by 'Utban ibn Malik in Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim as saying,

> **'Certainly Allah has forbidden the Fire for anyone who says, "There is no god but Allah", and who seeks by these words only the pleasure of Allah'.**[36]

Two of the Prophet's companions report that he, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said,

> **'Whenever someone says from his heart in singular devotion, his tongue pure in belief, "There is no god but Allah alone; He has no partner; His is the dominion, His is the praise, and He has power over all things", Allah opens a path for this in the heavens and smiles[37] upon whomever from among the people of the earth has said it, and it is the right of the servant of Allah upon whom He smiles that his request be granted'.**[38]

"Though performed in singular devotion to Allah, an act of worship is not accepted if it is incorrectly done," writes al-Fudhayl ibn 'lyadh. "One performed correctly, but not in singular devotion to Allah is not accepted either. Any act of worship must be performed both in complete devotion to Allah, and correctly. Complete devotion means that the act is for Allah alone. Correctly means that it is performed according to the Sunnah."[39]

Allah has given us a clear example of the contrast between absolute and flawed devotion to Him in this ayah from the Qur'an:

> **"Allah strikes a metaphor: A man who has several owners, quarrelling; and a man belonging wholly to one man. Are the two equal in comparison?"** (39:29).

Commenting on this ayah, Sayid Qutb says:

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[36] Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Masajid, 1/456, (263).

[37] The Arabic, hatta yandhuru 'alayhee, lit-erally means: 'until He looks at him'.

[38] Imam ibn Rajab reports this in Kalimat al- Ikhlaas; al-Albani remarks that it appears in al-Jami'a al-Kabir, (2/477), where Ya'qub ibn 'Asim says, 'Two of the Prophet's companions told me ... etc.' This Ya'qub is one of Imam Muslim's authorities. Ibn Hibban confirms this as well. If the isnad is sahih, then the hadith is sound.

[39] cf. Ibn Taimiyah, Iqtida as-Sirat al-Mustaqim, p.451.

“This example contrasts the servant whose devotion is to Allah alone with the one whose devotion is shared out among many. The latter is likened to a slave jointly owned by men who quarrel over him: to each of them he owes a duty and each of them make demands of him. His situation totally confounds him. He can find no way and no means to satisfy all of their conflicting and contradictory demands. The former, however, has but one master. He knows what he wants from him and does his duty to him, so he finds the road clearly marked before him. Are these two the same? Not at all: the man whose service is to one master benefits from the comfort and security, peace of mind and certainty that unite his actions and his goals with the means of achieving them; but the man with the quarrelling masters is shaken by torment. He can find no way out; if he pleases one the others are unhappy. The reality of the Unity of God is contained in this example, as is the truth about its antithesis, polytheism. The heart of the believer, rooted in the truth of God's Unity, is a heart through which guidance from Allah flows that is, inspired only by Him and dutiful to Him alone.”[40]

The significance of this is that it indicates that singularity of devotion is through singularity of purpose. As Allah says:

“Are (many) different lords better, or Allah the One, the Almighty?” (12:39)[41]

Islam requires submission to Allah alone; whatever else one has submitted to in this way must be abandoned. This is the true significance of the words, 'There is no god but Allah', since whoever submits to Allah and to something other than Him at the same time, has associated something with Allah. Allah does not forgive this. Whoever fails to submit to Him has scorned His worship:

“Surely those who scorn worship of Me will enter Hell disgraced.” (40:60).

The seventh prerequisite is to love the declaration of faith, to love all that it requires and all that it implies, to love all those who act upon it and who hold to all that it stands for and to feel anger at whatever contradicts it. Allah says:

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[40] Sayid Qutub, Fi Dhilal al-Qur'an, 5/3049.

[41] Muhammad Jamal ad-Din al-Qaasimi, Mahaasin at-Ta'weel, 14/5138.

“And from among mankind are some who take for themselves (objects of worship as) rivals to Allah, loving them as they should (only) love Allah. And those who believe are stronger in their love for Allah.” (2:165).

And He says:

“O you who believe! Whoever of you becomes a rebel against his deen, (know that in his place) Allah will bring a people whom He loves and who love Him, humble towards the believers, harsh towards the disbelievers, striving in the way of Allah, and not fearing the blame of any blamer.” (5:54).

The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said,

'The sweetness of faith belongs to whoever may find himself in these three states: that Allah and His Messenger are more dear to him than any other thing; that he loves someone only for the sake of Allah; and that he despises a return to disbelief after Allah had saved him from it, as much as he would hate to be thrown into the fires of Hell'.[42]

The signs of love for Allah are to give precedence to this love and to suppress your desires: to conquer your desire for what angers your Lord and to feel anger towards it; to ally yourself with Allah, His Messenger, and those who are with them; to oppose whoever opposes Him; and to follow in the footsteps of His Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, accepting his guidance.[43]

Ibn al-Qayim said in a poem:

“The love of the Beloved must be unconditionally returned.
If you claim love yet oppose the Beloved, then your love is but a pretence.
You love the enemies of your Beloved and still seek love in return.
You fight the beloved of your Beloved. Is this Love or the following of shaytan?
True devotion is nothing but total submission of body and soul to One Love.”

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[42] Sahih Bukhari, Kitab al-Iman, 1/60; Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Iman, 1/66.
[43] Hafiz al-Hakami, Ma'arij al-Qubul, 1/383.

We have seen men claim to submit, yet their loyalties are many. They put their trust here, and their hope there, and their love is without consequence.'[44]

[44] Ibn Qayim al-Jawziya, an-Nuniyya, p.158.

Chapter 4
Love and Hate and the Declaration of Faith

Love is the source of loyalty and hate is the source of opposition; it is by this that both the heart and the hand are moved to act. Love inspires intimacy, concern and help; hate provokes obstruction, enmity and rejection. Love and hate are both related to the declaration of faith and constitute essential elements in it. The evidence of this from the Qur'an and the Sunnah is considerable.

As for the Qur'an, consider the following ayat:

> **"Let not the believers take disbelievers for their friends in preference to believers. Whoever does this has no connection with Allah unless you are guarding yourselves against them as a precaution. Allah bids you to beware (only) of Himself. And to Allah is the journeying."** (3:28).

And He says:

> **"Say, (O Muhammad, to mankind): 'If you love Allah, follow me; Allah will love you and forgive you your wrong actions. Allah is Forgiving, Compassionate.' Say: 'Obey Allah and the Messenger.' And if they turn away, then surely Allah does not love the disbelievers."** (3:31-32).

Speaking of the aims of the enemies of Allah, He says:

> **"They long for you to disbelieve even as they disbelieve, so that you may be the same (as them). So do not choose friends from among them until they go out in the way of Allah."** (4:89)

and also:

> **"O you who believe! Do not take the Jews and the Christians for friends. They are friends of one another. And whoever of you takes them for friends is (one) of them. Surely Allah does not guide wrongdoing people."** (5:51)

and lastly:

> **"O you who believe! Whoever of you becomes a rebel against his deen, (know that in his place) Allah will bring a people whom He loves and who love Him, humble towards the believers, harsh towards the**

disbelievers, striving in the way of Allah, and not fearing the blame of any blamer" (5:54).

We will mention only a few of the many hadith and reports of the Companions on this subject: Imam Ah-mad reports from Jarir ibn Abdullah that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, made him swear an oath to ***'offer counsel to every Muslim and to steer clear of every disbeliever.'***[45] Ibn Shayba reports that the Prophet said,

> **"The strongest bond of faith is love for the sake of Allah and enmity for His sake."**[46]

Ibn Abbas reports that the Prophet said,

> **"The strongest bond of faith is loyalty for the sake of Allah and opposition for His sake, love for the sake of Allah and enmity for His sake."**[47]

Ibn Abbas is also reported to have said,

> ***"Whoever loves for the sake of Allah, and hates for the sake of Allah, and whoever seals a friendship for His sake, or declares an enmity for His sake, will receive, because of this, the protection of Allah. No one may taste true faith except by this, even if his prayers and fasts are many. People have come to build their relationships around the concerns of the world, but it will not benefit them in any way."***[48]

Shaikh Sulaiman ibn Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab explained the words of Ibn Abbas by saying that the meaning of ***'to seal a friendship for the sake of Allah'*** indicates the obligation of establishing relationships of love and trust for His sake; this is friendship for the sake of Allah. It also indicates that simple affection is not enough here; indeed what is meant is a love based upon alliance. This entails assistance, honour, and respect. It means being with those whom you love both in word and deed.

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[45] Imam Ahmad, Musnad, 4/357-8.

[46] Abu Bakr Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn Shaybah (d.235 AH), Kitab al-Iman.

[47] AtTabrani, alKabir,

[48] Ibn Rajab al-Hanbali, Jami' al'-Ulum wa'l-Hikam, p.30.

As for '**enmity for the sake of Allah**', it includes the obligation to declare enmity for His sake: opposition for the sake of Allah. It is to declare opposition in deed, to take up arms against His enemies, to shun them, and to stay far from them both in word and deed. This proves that simple opposition of the spirit is not enough, and that it must be a complete honouring of your commitment, for Allah says:

> **"There is a good example for you in Ibrahim and those with him, when they told their people: 'Surely we disassociate ourselves from you and all that you worship beside Allah. We have done with you. And there has arisen between us and you enmity and hate for ever until you believe in Allah only."** (60:4)[49]

All this leads us to conclude that loyalty for the sake of Allah really means to love Allah and to come to the assistance of His deen; it is to love those who are obedient to Him and to come to their help. Opposition for the sake of Allah is to feel anger at the enemies of Allah and to struggle against them. Because of this Allah has called the first group the 'party of Allah' and the second the 'party of Satan':

> **"Allah is the Protecting Guardian of those who believe. He brings them out of darkness into light. As for those who disbelieve, their patrons are false deities. They bring them out of light into darkness. Such are rightful owners of the Fire. They will abide therein."** (2:257).

And He says:

> **"Those who believe do battle for the cause of Allah; and those who disbelieve do battle for the cause of idols. So fight the friends of Satan. Surely Satan's strategy is always weak."** (4:76).

It is well known that Allah has never sent a Prophet on His mission without also raising up opponents against him. Allah says:

> **"Thus have We appointed for every prophet an adversary devils from mankind and the jinn who inspire in one another plausible words that are deceiving."** (6:112).

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[49] Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab, Shark Kitab at-Tawhid, p.422.

It may be that opponents of Divine Unity possess some learning, a part of Revelation, and proof. As Allah says:

> **"And when their Messengers brought them clear proofs (of Allah's Sovereignty), they exulted in the knowledge which they (themselves) possessed. And that which they had become accustomed to mock befell them."** (40:83).

It is the obligation of every Muslim to learn from Allah's deen whatever may serve as a weapon for him in the struggle against the friends of Satan. In this he should have no fear and no misgivings, since the devil's strategy is always weak. Allah says:

> **"And surely that Our host would be the victors."** (37:173).

To the host of Allah shall be the victory in discussion and in debate, as in war and strife. In this way an ordinary man from the party of the One God will overcome a thousand scholars of the disbelievers.[50]

If the aim of the enemies of Islam, whether they are atheists or Jews, or Christians or modernists, or Zionists or Communists, is the emasculation of the 'aqeedah of the Muslims, and the erosion of their unique character in order to make them 'the ass of the chosen people', (as it is put in 'The Protocols of the Elders of Zion'), then the urgency of this issue should become clear to every Muslim.

We should all take heed, for ourselves and for those who are with us, so that we may warn all the Muslims who are slipping away into the abyss of apostasy, warn them of the treacherous call of the disbelievers to what they call "brotherhood and equality", warn them of the false claim that religion is for Allah but that nationhood is for the masses. We will return to this point in more detail later.

For the present, the evidence is clear from the Qur'an and the Sunnah that allegiance is demanded by the declaration of faith since this is an essential part of its meaning. As Ibn Taimiya has said,

> 'The declaration of faith, "There is no god but Allah", requires you to love only for the sake of Allah, to hate only for the sake of Allah, to ally yourself only for the sake of Allah, to declare enmity only for the sake of Allah; it requires you to love what Allah loves and to hate what Allah

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[50] Abridged from Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab, Kashaf ash-Shubuhat, 3rd edition, p.20

hates.'[51] It also requires you to ally yourself to the Muslims wherever you find them and to oppose the disbelievers even if they are your closest kin."

[51] Ibn Taimiya, al-Ihtijaj bi'l-Qadar, p.62.

Chapter 5
The Declaration of Faith: On the Tongue and in the Heart

According to Ibn al-Qayim, belief in Divine Unity is not simply saying that Allah is the sole Creator and that He is Lord and Master of all things. This was what the pagans used to say, while at the same time worshipping many gods. Belief in Divine Unity does not only mean love of Allah, but also submission to Him, humility before Him, complete obedience to Him, and devotion to Him alone. It means that we strive for His pleasure in all our words and deeds, in what we hold on to and in what we give, in our love and in our hate. It can never be confused with the urge to disobey, or to do what you please in misguided self interest.

Whoever takes this to heart will understand the words of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace,

> **“Certainly Allah has forbidden the Fire from taking whoever says, "There is no god but Allah", and who says this for the pleasure of Allah.”**[52]

and in another hadith,

> **“Whoever says, "There is no god but Allah", shall not enter the Fire."**

So what do these reports really mean? Many people have misunderstood them, going so far as to say that these statements were later abrogated, and that they were made before the completion of the Shari'a, before we knew what we must and must not do. Others have said that the fire they refer to is the hell of the disbelievers, while others still interpret the actual entering of the fire to mean entering it for eternity; thus, '...shall not enter the Fire (for eternity).' These are just a few of their baseless interpretations.

In fact, the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, did not say that this would occur merely by pronouncing the declaration of faith; this would contradict our entire understanding of Islam. The hypocrites say these words with their tongues, but they are bound for the deepest pit of Hell, and will be punished even more severely than those who actively dispute the fact that there is no other god than He. What is being referred to is, of course, a matter of both the heart and the tongue.

While the heart must believe, it must also realize the truth: it must realize the meaning of the words of the declaration of faith, of what they deny and what

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[52] Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Masajid, 1/356.

they affirm; realise that there is no other divinity than Allah; and realise that the attribution of divinity to anything else is quite impossible. Thus its meaning must be taken to heart consciously and deliberately, with certainty and urgency. This is what protects you from the Fire.

This recalls the story of the man, who had murdered a hundred men, and though faith arose in his heart he took no notice of it, pushing it out of his breast; but when he came to death's door it again entered his heart and so he was one of those who entered paradise.[53]

And also the account about the prostitute whose heart was moved by the sight of a dog dying of thirst by the side of a well, eating the dust in desperation. With no higher purpose or hope of reward, she filled her shoe to the brim and gave it to the dog. Though people usually beat it she took it by the paw and stilled it until it had drunk, knowing that it could neither reward her nor even thank her in any way. Her supreme act of love wiped out all her previous sins and this is how she was forgiven.[54]

Imam Muslim reports a hadith in which the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, says,

> **"Whoever says, "There is no god but Allah", and denies whatever he used to worship beside Allah, will find that his life and his property are protected, and his reward is with Allah."[55]**

Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab points out that this is the greatest proof we have of the real meaning of the declaration of faith, since neither life nor property are protected simply by pronouncing these words; indeed there is no significance at all in just saying them, nor in advocating them, nor even in calling on Allah alone. Your life and your property are not protected until you actually deny whatever you used to worship beside Allah; and if you have any doubt or hesitation about that, then you are still outside Islam.[56]

This should make clear the error of the Murji'a sect[57], who said that faith was equivalent to knowledge, and disbelief to ignorance, and who in this way severed deeds from belief. Everyone knows that the pagans of Makkah understood what the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, meant by saying, '**There is no god but Allah'.** They understood it and they believed it,

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[53] See Sahih Bukhari, Kitab alAnbia', 6/512, (3470); and Sahih Muslim, Kitab atTawba, 4/2118, (2766).

[54] Ibn al-Qayim, Madarij as-Salikin, 1/330-332.

[55] Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Iman, 1/53, (23).

[56] Ibn Abdul Wahhab, Kitab at-Tawhid, p. 115.

[57] The Murji'a sect believed that belief is all that is needed to reach the Garden.

but they arrogantly refused to acknowledge it; so their faith in the One God, the Provider, the Bringer of Life and Death, did not benefit them at all. When the Prophet told them,

> **“Say, "There is no god but Allah"**
>
> they said:
>
> '**Does he make the gods One God? Surely that is an astounding thing.**'**”** (38:5).

The strange thing is that while the disbelievers know that the declaration of faith is more than just saying the words, some people who claim to be Muslims do not. They think that these reports mean that a simple utterance of the words, '**There is no god but Allah**', with none of their meaning entering the heart, is all that is required. But wiser people understand that it means that there is no creator other than Allah: no other provider, giver of life, bringer of death, and no other who holds all things in his hand. However, there is still no benefit to be gained by knowing what the declaration of faith means if you are without any belief. This throws new light on the meaning of those reports in which the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, mentions the simple repetition of these words, such as:

> **“I have been ordered to struggle against people until they say, "There is no god but Allah.”**[58]

Some people hope to imply by this that whoever recites the declaration of faith is not a disbeliever, and that we should not oppose him, regardless of whatever else he does. These people should recall that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, fought the Jews and cursed them even though they said, '**There is no god but Allah**'. Not only this, but also the Companions of the Prophet fought the Bani Hanifa who not only said, 'There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah', but also prayed and claimed to be Muslims; this was the same for the people whom Ali ibn Abi Talib burned alive for saying that he was an incarnation of Allah.

However, when you ask these people about the case of someone who denies the rising of the dead, they say that he has disbelieved and that we should fight him, even if he says, 'There is no god but Allah'. They agree that whoever

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[58] Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Iman, 1/51, (20).

disputes any of the five pillars of Islam has disbelieved and should be opposed with the pen and the sword, even though he may pronounce the declaration of faith.

The contradiction here is that none of these denials involve the central tenet of Islam, which is the affirmation of Divine Unity, and yet these people are prepared to go to war over them; but when it is a matter of someone who denies the very essence of belief, the Divine Unity of God, then they provide him with an excuse for its denial, even though it is the very source and foundation of the deen.

So it becomes clear that these people are the enemies of Allah, and that they have not understood at all the meaning of what the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, has said:

It is well known that when a man declares himself to be a Muslim we should act prudently towards him until he does something that clearly contradicts his claim.

Allah says:

> **“O you who believe! When you go out (to fight) in the way of Allah, be careful, and do not say to one who offers you peace: 'You are not a believer,' seeking the chance profits of this life (so that you may despoil him). With Allah are plenteous spoils. You too were like this once, and Allah gave you hope, so be careful; surely Allah is well aware of what you do.”** (4:94).

This verse indicates the necessity of restraint until such time as you are sure about the situation, since Allah says: 'be careful'. If it becomes clear that someone is at odds with Islam, then fight him. If this were not the case, then the command to verify the situation before fighting would be meaningless.

Similarly the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said of the Kharijites,

> **'Wherever you find them fight them, for were I to discover them I would destroy them utterly, as the people of 'Ad were destroyed.’**[59]

He said this even though they were meticulously observant in their dedication and in their worship, so much so that the companions, with whom they studied, felt humbled before them. Their declaration of faith, however, did

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[59] Sahih Muslim, Kitab d-Zakat, 2742, (1064).

not benefit them, and neither did the fullness of their worship, nor indeed their service to Islam, once they had abandoned the Shari'ah.[60]

Any intelligent person knows that if this whole matter hinged upon a single word, a mere word, then it would have been a simple thing for the Quraish to say it. They would have said, '**There is no god but Allah**', saving both themselves alot of trouble and their gods from ridicule. But they knew that the declaration of faith also involved a commitment, and it was this commitment that threatened their power and status in the land.

The point here is that Islam is a force that liberates all people from the unjust slavery of one to another, and places mankind at the service of the One, the Victorious. The degree of their fear of Allah became the measure of their worth and excellence among people. Thus the habits and customs of the jahiliyyah, inherited from parents and grandparents, had no place. Every good hearted, sincere Muslim must strive towards the full realisation of the declaration of faith, in order that each and every one of us may worship Allah with insight, knowledge, and certainty. This is the real challenge of Islam.

[60] Muhammad ibn Abdul-Wahhab, Kasf ash-Shubuhat, p.40. The Kharijites believed that committing major wrong actions turns a Muslim into an unbeliever.

Chapter 6
The Effects of the Declaration of Faith on the Heart

Abu A'la al-Mawdudi mentions in his book, Fundamentals of Islam, nine effects of the declaration of faith upon the heart.

Firstly, as a believer you are not narrow minded like those who believe in many gods or who dispute the existence of God altogether.

Secondly, as a believer you feel a sense of your own worth and dignity, since it is Allah alone who brings benefit and harm, and He alone who brings life and death. Wisdom, power and authority are His. Because of this the heart feels no fear of anything other than Him. No head bows to another, no one is humbled before anyone else. No one may fear another or be intimidated by human power or majesty, since Allah is the Majestic and the Omnipotent over all things. In contrast to this we see the subjugation of the disbelievers, the Christians and the Jews, and the pagans and the atheists, to one another.

Thirdly, as a believer your sense of honour and self esteem are inspired by faith. The Muslim knows humility without humiliation, and pride without vainglory. Satan can not affect his pride or inspire conceit in him since he is well aware that it is Allah who has given him all that he has and who is capable of stripping him of everything at any time. Yet you see the atheist bursting with pride whenever some worldly benefit comes his way.

Fourthly as a believer you have the knowledge and the certainty that it is only through purification of the self and the performance of good works that success may be had. As for the disbelievers they have only the false hope that the 'son' of God will wash away the sins of the world, or that since they are themselves the 'sons' of God and His high priests they will not be punished for their sins, or that they will benefit from the intervention of the noble and pious, or that their offerings and sacrifices to their gods will give them license to do as they please. As for the atheist who supposes that his existence in this world is without purpose and unguided by any higher plan, his gods are his own passions and desires. To these things he has dedicated his life.

Fifthly, the believer in this 'aqeedah will not know hopelessness or despair, because he believes that Allah is Master of all that the heavens and earth contain. So his heart is reassured in peace and in hope. Even when weak in himself and defeated, when life closes in around him, he knows that those whom Allah takes into His protection will not be neglected or abandoned so long as they depend upon Allah and trust in Him. The disbelievers prefer to depend upon their own feeble resources, yet how quickly despair overtakes them, plunging them into desperation, and even driving them to suicide.

Sixthly, belief in this 'aqeedah develops in the individual great determination, fortitude, patience, confidence and trust, since you are engaged in the greatest of enterprises, the quest for the pleasure of Allah. Indeed you feel that what supports you is the power of He who possesses the heavens and the earth. In this way the strength and determination of the believer, his resolute will inspired by this confidence, becomes like a mountain that no human force may move. Could there ever be such a strength and confidence as this to inspire a person's disbelief?

Seventh, the believer derives both strength and support from the declaration of faith, since it puts you out of reach of the two things that can undermine your strength, love of the world and fear of it. Love of the world is to place love of yourself, your spouse or your money before love of Allah. Fear of the world is fear of an unknown force, not under the power of God, waiting to destroy you. The believer knows that there is no god but Allah, and so neither of these things can gain any power over the heart, because it is reassured by the fact that Allah is the Sole Possessor of both life and property. Once you dedicate yourself to the pleasure of your Lord regardless of the cost, you suddenly realise that no one can deprive you of your life, neither man nor beast: the gun, the sword and the stone do not kill; it is God alone who brings death. There is no stronger determination than that of someone who believes in Allah. No man can intimidate him and no army frightens him, neither flashing swords nor bullets falling like rain. Whenever a believer presents himself for battle in the path of Allah, his strength is multiplied tenfold. So where does this leave the Christians and the Jews, the disbelievers and the atheists?

Eighth, by believing in the declaration of faith you can take command over your own life, take pride in yourself, in your confidence and determination, and in this way purify your heart from the influence of avarice, jealousy, cowardice, spite, and all other vices.

Ninth, and by far the most important of these effects on the heart, is the knowledge that the declaration of faith guides you to understand the law of Allah, and helps you to keep carefully to it. Thus you are awakened to the fact that Allah is totally aware of every thing, and that He is nearer to you than your jugular vein; and although you may be able to escape from most kinds of danger, there is no escaping from Allah.

The degree to which faith pervades the human mind determines in turn the extent of the believer's obedience to the laws of Allah, his keeping to Allah's limits and not coming near to what Allah has forbidden, and his hastening to do good works and to fulfill Allah's commands.

The declaration of faith is the first of the five essential pillars of Islam. It is also the most important of these when it comes to ascertaining the extent of a

person's faith. The Muslim is the obedient servant who keeps near to Allah. We can not do this until we believe from the depths of our hearts that there is no god but Allah. The declaration of faith is the source of Islam and the basis of its strength. Regardless of the details of our belief or the different shades of legal opinion, everything ultimately rests upon this one statement: the power of Islam relies upon nothing else. If this should ever be lost, then nothing at all would be left of our deen.[61]

Ibn Rajab, when commenting on the declaration of faith, quotes Sufyian ibn 'Ayneeyah:

> "Allah did not bestow upon His servants a greater blessing than the knowledge that there is no god but Allah. For the people of Paradise these words are the same as fresh rain is to a people who live on the parched Earth. By it the scales of Heaven and Hell are set. Because of it the Messengers were sent into battle. Whoever declares it to be so, his wealth and his life are protected, but whoever denies it shall find himself destroyed. It is the key to paradise, and the single call of all the Messengers."[62]

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[61] Abu A'la al-Mawdudi, Mabadi' al-Islam, p. 87

[62] Ibn Rajab, Kalimat al-Ikhlas, p. 53

Chapter 7
What Negates the Declaration of Faith

We have now discussed the meaning of the declaration of faith, the obligations that it places upon the believer, its proof and its effects upon those who proclaim it. In order provide a more complete picture of the precise meaning of the words, '**There is no god but Allah**', we will now turn our attention to what contradicts it.

It is common knowledge that disbelief, shirk, hypocrisy and apostasy all stand in complete contradiction to Islam. Before discussing this point, however, we should perhaps mention the necessity of supporting our arguments from both primary as well as secondary sources. It is in comparing the sources that a cogent reply to the claims of the Murji'a and other sects may be found. This method will expose both the distortion inherent in the beliefs of such groups as the Murji'a, and the extremism of the Kharijites, both of whom have departed from the straight path. Islam steers a course of moderation between neglect and excess.

This topic has been much discussed, both in the past and in the present, and every opinion has its partisans. Ibn Qayim spoke about it at length. He says:
'Disbelief and faith are mutually exclusive: when one of them disappears the other takes its place.

'Faith is fundamental and consists of many branches, each of which may be known as 'iman': its branches are the prayer, zakat, hajj and fasting, as well as actions of the inner self such as modesty, reliance upon Allah, fear of Allah and drawing near to Him. The least of its branches is to remove an obstacle from the road as an act of faith.

'There are branches of iman which are vital to the very existence of belief; one of these is the declaration of faith. But there are others that are not vital to belief; the removal of an obstacle from the road is an example of this. Between these two extremes there are branches of iman that are associated more closely with the declaration of faith, and others that are associated more closely with the removal of obstacles.

'Disbelief too is fundamental and has its branches. As a branch of iman is related to faith, so a branch of disbelief is related to kufr. If modesty is a characteristic of faith, immodesty is one of disbelief. If honesty comes from faith, dishonesty comes from faithlessness. The prayer, zakat, hajj and fasting are branches of faith, while abandoning any one of them is a kind of disbelief. To rule by what Allah has revealed is a quality of those who have faith, but to rule by another law is a quality of those who are without belief. All disobedience comes from disbelief and all obedience is due to belief.

'The branches of faith are of two types: the first is speech, and the other is action. In the same way, the branches of disbelief may take the form of a word spoken or a deed performed.

'Of the branches of faith connected to speech, there are those whose disappearance results in the disappearance of faith itself. This is also true of those branches of faith that are connected to action. When such a deed is left unperformed, the result is an eclipse of iman.

'Likewise the branches of disbelief are of two types, both speech and action. Thus it follows that deliberately saying a word of disbelief will, in fact, result in disbelief, since this is one of the branches of kufr. It is the same for the performance of any act of disbelief, like prostrating to a graven image, or making fun of the Qur'an, since kufr is at its root.

‘Therefore, we should realise that faith is a matter of both word and deed. Words include both the private statement to oneself, which is inner conviction, and the public statement to the world, which is the declaration of faith. As for deeds, the private act is the inner resolve, sincerity and intention known to the heart and known to Allah. Public acts are the outward actions of each one of us in the world. If these four things disappear then faith too, has gone.

'If the heart knows no sincerity, then whatever else you have of faith can not benefit you, since sincerity must precede belief. Sincerity makes belief worthwhile and without it actions of the heart are nothing. This is the root of the disagreement between the ahl'ul-Sunnah wa'l-jama'aand the Murji'a sect. The ahl'ul-Sunnah wa'l-jama'a maintain that faith would be destroyed, and that sincerity would be useless in the absence of the inner action of the heart, that is, love for and submission to the message. The faith of Iblis (shay-tan) and of Pharaoh and his people, and of the Jews and the pagan Arabs, and of all others who apparently acknowledged the sincerity and truth of the Prophet's message, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, was destroyed in this way. Though they agreed with it both inwardly and outwardly, and even protested that they had not denied it, they neither followed him nor put their trust in him.

'If it is true that faith diminishes as the inner actions of the heart wane, then it is also true that faith has a direct connection to the most significant of your outward actions. This is especially true if your actions are liable to inhibit the love in your heart and the desire to follow it; this in turn undermines any sincere commitment you may have had, as in the examples given above. If your heart does not know inward obedience, you will not be able to obey outwardly either. But if your heart had followed and obeyed, then you too would have done the same. Whoever is unable to obey lacks the sincerity to motivate him to do so; this is the nature of faith.

'Faith is not a matter of simple sincerity of belief, as some have claimed. Rather it is sincere belief in the necessity of obedience and of following the heart. Guidance, too, does not simply mean knowing the truth and the arguments which support it. It also means that you realise the necessity of following it and of acting in accordance with it. Without this realisation, guidance is neither complete nor is it sufficient, just as simply believing that the message is sincere does not in itself constitute sincerity of faith.

'Disbelief, too, is of two types: one is disbelief by inner stubbornness and recalcitrance, and the other is by outer action.

'The first means to stubbornly deny that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, came with knowledge from his Lord, knowledge of His Names and Attributes, knowledge of His works and knowledge of His Shari'ah. This kind of disbelief contradicts faith totally.

'As for disbelief in deed, it may be divided into a disbelief which contradicts faith, and one which does not. Some of the acts which contradict faith are the worship of idols, the ridiculing of the Qur'an, and the killing or slandering of a prophet. Ruling by something other than what Allah has revealed and abandoning the prayer are also, undoubtedly, acts of disbelief. It is not possible to say that we should not call someone who does any of these things a disbeliever, since Allah and His Messenger have both referred to such people in this way. According to what the Prophet, may Allah bless and grant him peace, has said, whoever rules by other than what Allah has revealed, or abandons the prayer, is a disbeliever.

'A distinction between action and conviction remains, however, and while we can say that, because of some action, a person is a disbeliever, this is not proof that he does not believe. We know that Allah does not call someone who does not rule by what He has revealed a disbeliever, in the absolute sense of disbelief, nor did the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, call anyone who had abandoned the prayer a disbeliever, absolutely.[63] In fact, the Prophet denied this in the case of the fornicator, the thief, the drunkard, and in the case of the man who troubles his neighbours.

Also, we have the hadith:

> **"Whoever consults a fortune teller and believes what he says, or commits sodomy with his wife, is free of what has been revealed to Muhammad"**[64]

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[63] Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Iman, 1/88, (87).

[64] Abu Dawud, Kitab at-Tibb, 4/225; also Mishkat al-Masabih, 2/1294, (4599); al-Albani said that it is Sahih

He, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, also said:

“If a man says to his brother”O disbeliever!", then one of them has fallen into it.”[65]

'A person may keep the law of Allah, not exceeding the limits nor approaching what has been forbidden, hastening to good works and the fulfillment of Allah's commands, only according to the depth of his faith.

'Allah has referred to someone who observes part of the Revelation and leaves part of it aside as believing in the part that he observes and disbelieving in the part that he does not. He says:

“And when We made a covenant with you not to spill one another's blood, nor to drive one another away from your homes, you agreed and you were witnesses to it. But now you kill one another, and you drive your own people out of their homes; supporting one another against them, in sin and enmity. And if some of them came to you as captives you would ransom them; but driving them out (in the first place) was forbidden to you. Do you believe in part of the Book and disbelieve in part of it? What is the reward of whoever does this other than dishonour in this world? And, on the Day of Resurrection they will be returned to an even more terrible punishment. And Allah is not unaware of what you do.” (2:84-85).

'Allah says that they agreed to His covenant, which He also commanded them to keep. Part of it was that they would not kill each other, or drive each other out of their homes. He then says that they disobeyed His commands and a party of them then attacked the other and drove them away. This was how they disbelieved in the Revelation that came to them. Then He ends by saying that they would ransom some of the defeated party out of respect for their covenant with Allah. So they believed in the part of it that they observed, and disbelieved in the part of it that they ignored.

'In action and conviction, faith is the opposite of disbelief. In a well known hadith, the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, makes a distinction between action and conviction when he tells us:

"To curse a Muslim is despicable, to kill him is disbelief."[66]

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[65] Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Iman, 1/79, (60).

‘The conviction is in cursing and the action is in killing: he regarded cursing as despicable but not evidence of disbelief, while killing is, apparently, proof of disbelief. It is well known that what he meant by this was disbelief in action, not in conviction. This kind of disbelief can not take someone completely out of the circle of Islam, just as the fornicator, the thief and the drunkard may still be called Muslims, but not believers.

‘This is the understanding of the Prophet's companions, may the blessings and peace of Allah be on him and on his family and on his companions, who knew the Book of Allah better than anyone else: they knew the meaning of submission and the meaning of disbelief and they knew the distinction between them. We do not accept anyone else's opinion about this.

'Later, some people who failed to understand this split up into two groups. The first group said that those who commit major wrong actions should be excluded from the Muslim community, and were thought to be condemned to Hell for ever. The second group said that such people should still be considered believers.[67] The first group over-exaggerated and the second turned a blind eye. Of course, the correct position is to follow the Prophet's Sunnah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, which is to follow the guidance of Allah.

‘The lesson of the Sunnah implies that there is a disbelief that is less than disbelief, a hypocrisy that is less than hypocrisy, a shirk that is less than shirk, a corruption that is less than corruption, and an oppression that is less than oppression. Ibn Abbas said that the ayah:

> **And whoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed, such are disbelievers.** (5:44)

> Refers to an act of disbelief.
> Also, we have the hadith,

> '**Whoever consults a fortune teller and believes what he says, or commits sodomy with his wife, is free of what has been revealed to Muhammad.**'

> He, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, also said,

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[66] Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Iman, 1/81, (64)

[67] This refers respectivly to the positions of those who adopted the Murji'a and Khariji heresies.

'If a man says to his brother, "O Disbeliever!", then one of them has fallen into it.'

'While from the point of view of their outward actions we can say that they are disbelievers, we can not claim that these same deeds constitute recalcitrance in the face of, or rejection of, belief. This explains the words of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, when he said,

'**Do not turn on each other like disbelievers after I have gone, tormenting one another.**'

and also**,**

'**He disbelieves in them, but it is not like the one who disbelieves in Allah and his Angels and his Books and his Messengers.**'

‘This was related in a separate report as 'disbelief that does not take one out of the community', and again, 'disbelief that is less than disbelief, oppression that is less than oppression, and corruption that is less than corruption.' 'This is clear to whoever really understands the Qur'an, for Allah has called the man who rules by other than the Revelation a disbeliever, and He has called whoever disputes what has been revealed to His Messenger a disbeliever, but these two are not cast from the same mould. 'Consider:

The disbelievers, they are wrongdoers. (2:254)

and, with reference to the laws of marriage and divorce:

And whoever goes beyond the limits of Allah certainly wrongs himself. (65:1)

Speaking in the Qur'an the Prophet Yunus says:

There is no god but You, Glory be to You! Surely, I have been a wrongdoer. (21:87)

and Adam says:

Our Lord we have wronged ourselves. (7:23)

and Moses says:

My Lord, surely I have wronged my self, so forgive me. (28:16)

‘It is clear that we are dealing with two kinds of wrong doing here. In the Qur'an, the disbelievers are called 'corrupt':

“And He misleads by it only the corrupt; those who break the covenant of Allah after ratifying it.” (2:26-27)

and also:

“Truly We have revealed to you clear signs, and only the corrupt will disbelieve in them.” (2:99)

'There are many more such examples; but the believer too is called 'corrupt', as these ayat show:

O you who believe! If a corrupt person brings you some news, then verify it, or else you may unknowingly cause hardship to people, and then be sorry for what you have done. (49:6)

(This was revealed with reference to an incident involving al-Hakam ibn al'As, who was not literally 'corrupt'.) And again:

And those who accuse honourable women but do not bring four witnesses, whip them (with) eighty lashes and never (afterward) accept their testimony. They indeed are corrupt. (24:4)

'While the term is applied to Iblis:

So he rebelled against his Lord's command. (17:50)

it may also be applied to the pilgrim:

Whoever is minded to perform the pilgrimage therein (let him remember that) there is (to be) no lewdness nor corruption nor angry conversation on the pilgrimage. (2:197)

So corruption is not always of the same degree or type.

'We find the same duality in the case of association of some object of worship with Allah, since there is an act of association called Greater Shirk, that takes one out of the community and there is another, Lesser Shirk that does not. This lesser one could be as simple a thing as showing off. 'About Greater Shirk Allah says:

> **Surely whoever ascribes partners to Allah, for him Allah has forbidden the Garden. His abode is the Fire. For wrongdoers there will be no helpers.** (5:72)

and also:

> **For whoever ascribes partners to Allah, it is as if he had fallen from the sky and the birds had snatched him or the wind blown him to a far off place.**(22:31)

'About showing off He says:

> **And whoever hopes for the meeting with his Lord, let him do righteous works, and associate no partner in the worship due only to his Lord.** (18:110)

'On this same subject of Lesser Shirk, the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said,

> **'Whoever swears an oath by other than Allah has associated something with Him.'**

'This was related by Abu Dawood and others.[68] However, it is well known that swearing an oath by something other than Allah does not take one out of the community of the Muslims, and it does not make someone a disbeliever. In the same vein the Prophet said,

> **"Shirk in this Ummah is stealthier than creeping ants".[69]**

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[68] Abu Dawood, Kitab al-Iman, 3/570, (3251) Tirmidhi, Kitab al-Iman 5/253 (1535); also ash-Shawqani in Nayl al-Awtar, 8/257, stating that al-Hakim says it is Sahih.

[69] Imam Ahmad, al-Musnad 4/403; al-Albani includes it in his al-Jami'a as-Saghir, 3/333, (3624) saying that it is sahih

'Shirk, disbelief, corruption, oppression and ignorance may all be divided into two sorts: a kind that takes a person out of the community and another that does not. This is the same again for hypocrisy, since a person may be a convinced hypocrite or may only sometimes act like a hypocrite. It is the convinced and confirmed hypocrites whom Allah has denounced so severely in the Qur'an, promising them the deepest pit of Hell. As for someone with the behaviour of a hypocrite, the Prophet, may the peace and blessings of Allah be on him, is reported in a sahih hadith to have said,

> **"There are three signs of a hypocrite: when he speaks he lies; when he makes a promise he breaks it; and when you trust him he betrays you."**[70]

He also said,

> **"There are four characteristics by which you can recognise the total hypocrite; whoever exhibits one of them exhibits an attribute of hypocrisy: when he speaks he lies; when he makes an agreement he breaks it; when he argues he behaves despicably; and when you trust him he betrays you".**

'This is the behaviour of a hypocrite; it does not necessarily rule out faith, but if it takes root and establishes itself, it could in time completely remove a person from Islam, even if he still prays and fasts and claims that he is a Muslim. Faith should correct the hypocritical behaviour of the believer, but if there is no faith, then the growth of hypocrisy will proceed until, like a cancer, it completely fills the heart.

'According to Ismail ibn Saad,[71] this was supported by Imam Ahmad. He said, "I asked Ahmad ibn Hanbal for his opinion about the condition of someone who, while continuing to pray and pay zakat and fast, is afflicted by persistent major wrong actions that he finds impossible to resist. He replied that this is the subject of the hadith,

> **'The fornicator is not a believer while he commits fornication'.**[72]

'This means that he is no longer a believer, but he is still a Muslim. The same hadith continues:

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[70] Sahih Bukhari, Kitab al-Iman, 1/89, (33,34); Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Iman 1/78, (58,59)

[71] One of the companions of Imam Ahmad; see Ibn Abu Ya'la, Tabaqat al-Hanabila, 1/104.

[72] Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Iman, 1/76, (57).

'an imbiber is not a believer while he is engaged in drinking; a thief is not a believer while he is in the act of stealing'.

Ibn Abbas also said this about the ayah:

"And whoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed, such are disbelievers." (5:44)

'Ismail ibn Sa'id said:

"I asked Ahmad, 'What is this disbelief?'
He said, 'It is the disbelief that does not take you out of the community. It is not like believing in part of the Revelation and disbelieving in another part of it; this is real disbelief, about which there is no doubt in anyone's mind.'"

'The point is that someone can combine in his heart faith and disbelief, devote himself to Allah alone and at the same time associate something else with Him, be God-fearing and also boldly defiant, be hypocritical and sincere. This is one of the fundamental positions of the ahl'ul-sunnah, who differ in this with lovers of innovation and invention in religion, the Kharijites,[73] and the Mu'tazilites,[74] the Qadirites,[75] and their like.

'The other point that this matter raises relates to the doctrine that maintains that sinners may be brought out of the Fire or may remain in it. There is ample evidence from the Qur'an and the Sunnah to support this, as well as that provided by the agreement of the companions and by natural reasoning. Allah says:

And most of them do not believe in Allah without attributing partners (to Him). (12:106)

'Here Allah confirms their belief in Him together with their Shirk. 'And again:

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[73] The Kharijites believed that committing major wrong actions turns a Muslim into a disbeliever
[74] The Mu'tazilites believed that the Qur'an was a created thing and that it is impossible for Allah to be seen. They did not believe in the punishment in the grave, nor in intercession.
[75] The Qadirites believed that the creation has free will, inde-pendant of the will of Allah, and rejected the doctrine of 'qadr wa'1-qada'.

> **The Arabs say: 'We believe.' Say (to them, O Muhammad): 'You do not believe, so rather, say, "We submit", for faith has not yet entered into your hearts. And if you obey Allah and His Messenger, He will not withhold anything from you of (the reward of) your actions. Surely Allah is Forgiving, Compassionate.'**(49:14)

'So their submission and obedience to Allah is confirmed, while their faith is denied.

'When faith is mentioned in the Qur'an, it means absolute faith; for example:

> **Surely the (true) believers are only those who believe in Allah and His Messenger and then do not doubt, but struggle with their wealth and their selves in the way of Allah.** (49:15)

'These people are not hypocrites in the real sense of the word: they are Muslims by virtue of their obedience to Allah and His Messenger; however, they are not believers, even though there was some faith in them that brought them out from among the disbelievers.

'Imam Ahmad continued saying,

> "Whoever comes with these four things, meaning fornication, theft, drunkenness or brigandage, or four like them, or even more than four, is still a Muslim, but you cannot call him a believer. If he comes with something less than this, we say he is a believer but deficient in faith. This is indicated by the words of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, when he said,
>
> > **'Whoever has one of these characteristics has one of the attributes of hypocrisy.'**
>
> This proves that a man may be a hypocrite and a Muslim at the same time."

'In this way showing off is regarded as Shirk, for if a man hopes to be seen doing good works then he has combined Shirk with Islam. And if one rules a land by something other than what Allah has revealed, or does something that the Messenger of Allah has called disbelief, while he is at the same time devoted to Islam and to the observance of its Shari'a, then he has combined disbelief with Islam.

'We have already said that every disobedient person is one of the people of disbelief, just as all of those who are obedient should be counted among the people of faith. So when you see an obedient person you may call him a believer or you may not. Likewise when you see a disobedient person you may call him a disbeliever and then again you may not. It is not a matter of saying absolutely this way or that: this one is a Muslim that one is not. Rather, we are dealing here with two things: one is a name, a word, while the other is a legal category.

'As for the word, we can easily say that if the shoe fits then wear it, but as for the category, the question is, does a particular trait or characteristic actually constitute disbelief or not? When we speak of words and what they designate we speak about something that may be legal or linguistic; but when we speak about specific categories of this kind then we have narrowed the meaning to the strict legal sense of the term.

'Our final point is that just because someone possesses one of the characteristics of faith, it is not necessarily accurate to call him a believer; and conversely, just because someone possesses one of the characteristics of disbelief, it is not necessarily accurate to call him a disbeliever. One would not, for example, call everyone who had some knowledge a scholar, for knowledge is not the same as understanding. Not everyone with some knowledge of fiqh is a faqih; nor would you say that everyone who knows something about medicine is a doctor.

'Nevertheless, this does not mean that you are prevented from calling someone a believer, a hypocrite, or a disbeliever, if his behaviour justifies it. As the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said,

"Whoever abandons it has disbelieved"

and he said,

"Whoever swears an oath by other than Allah has disbelieved"

and lastly,

"Whoever comes to a fortune teller and believes in what he has been told has disbelieved ...".

'An attribute of disbelief is not in itself proof of total disbelief, so when someone does something that is forbidden we call it a corrupt act by which he

has transgressed, but we do not call him a corrupt person himself, or at least not until corruption overpowers him.'[76]



[76] This section is taken entirely from Ibn al-Jawaziya's Kitab as-Salat, pp. 25-31.

Chapter 8
Disbelief in Action and Conviction

Disbelief in Rulers

A few of the terms that appear in the preceding text of Ibn al-Qayim al-Jawziya have been misunderstood in the past, especially those dealing with political rule. Ibn al-Qayim has pointed out that to rule by something other than what Allah has revealed is lesser disbelief. It is felt that some further explanation of this is necessary in order to avoid any confusion.

The Muslim community was founded on the adherence to and application of the Shari'ah right from the time of its establishment by the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. This was also the case in the time of the rightly guided Caliphs, and the Umayyads continued their tradition.

Although some of them twisted it, the law that they applied to the people was the Shari'ah, whose protection, guidance and justice everyone enjoyed. When the Abbasids succeeded them, the law by which they ruled was again the Shari'ah, although at times people were hard pressed to realise it. Finally, the Tartars arrived and Hulaqu imposed their traditional law, known as the 'Yasaq', upon the subject peoples. We will return to this subject again later.

Everything else being equal, the opinions of the founders of the Muslim community, such as Ibn al-Qayim, are beyond reproach; and if a ruler is guilty of greed, nepotism, corruption, or anything similar, then such behaviour is without doubt a disbelief that is 'less than disbelief.'

However, what has befallen the Muslims in modern times is that our rulers have pushed the Shari'ah of Allah aside, describing it as backward and reactionary, and claiming that it is ill-suited to modern life and the technological age. This is, in fact, a new kind of rejection of faith that has arisen in the life of the Muslim community.

Furthermore, these ignorant claims do not just end here; rather these rulers have pursued them totally, and have replaced the Shari'ah with French, English and American law, and with 'socialist humanism' or its like, drawn from the myriad variations of ignorant disbelief, exchanging a pearl for a glass bead.
The proofs against them are overwhelming, not the least of which is what has just been quoted from Ibn al-Qayim who states,

'This is real disbelief about which there is no doubt in anyone's mind.'

Indeed there is no disagreement at all about it: to put the Shari'ah aside with the claim that it is lacking and deficient, and then to claim that some other

law is superior to it, and so to water it down to suit the fashion of the times, is blatant disbelief.

Ibn al-Qayim also states that the ruler who does not stick to the letter of the law or who neglects it in some way, but who is otherwise 'devoted to Islam and to the observance of its Shari'ah' commits lesser disbelief. This 'devoted' ruler is the one to whom we apply the ruling of 'lesser disbelief. But this is clearly not the case of the ruler who replaces the Shari'ah with his own law.

Then there is the matter of legislation regarding the things that the Shari'ah permits or forbids. Our ulama', both past and present, are all agreed that this is the exclusive preserve of Allah, Who holds all creation in His hand. Whoever claims this right for himself has claimed one of Allah's Divine Attributes and has set himself up as an object worthy of worship along with Him. We will examine this point in more detail later.

To override the Divine law and to impose instead of it the fleeting desires of man, is one of the acts that our ulama' have always said takes a person out of Islam; and this could not be otherwise. No one can deny this.
Allah says:

"Truly the Creation and the Command are His." (7:54)

Thus we all recognise that it is Allah Who determines our faith and our disbelief. He is the Creator of the heavens and the earth, the Master of all power and authority, and governance and leadership.[77]

Muhammad ibn Ibrahim Al-ash-Shaykh explains the words of Imam Ahmad which were mentioned earlier - 'This is real disbelief about which there is no doubt in anyone's mind' - saying,

> 'Clearly the greatest disbelief is to elevate a secular profanity to the position of the Revelation brought by the hand of Gabriel, upon whom be peace, to the heart of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, so that his voice should ring out across the world.'[78]

Ibn al-Qayim also says, 'The fact of the matter is that the phrase, "rule by other than what Allah has revealed", refers to all disbelief, both greater and lesser, according to the circumstances. If a ruler understands the obligation to rule in accordance with what Allah has revealed, but refuses to do so out of

[77] See Sayid Qutub's comments on this ayah in his Fi Dhilal al-Quran, (3/1297). See also Tafsir Ibn Kathir

[78] Tahkim al-Qawanin, p.l.

disobedience, while knowing full well that this exposes him to the threat of punishment, then this is a case of lesser disbelief.

'But if he believes that this is not an obligation and that he is able to choose this or that, when he knows that the only option is the rule of Allah, then this is greater disbelief. Finally, if his error is because of ignorance, then the ruling that applies to him is the same as for anyone else who makes a mistake.'[79]

Ibn Taimiya says,

> 'There is no doubt that whoever does not believe in the obligation to rule by what Allah has revealed to His Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, is a disbeliever. Whoever sanctions another to rule a people in whichever way he pleases, without reference to what Allah has revealed, is a disbeliever. He may claim to be just, but there is no people who would not claim to be just, even if this justice were only discernible to the powerful amongst them.
>
> 'Indeed many of those who like to call themselves Muslims still rule according to the traditions of their people, traditions which have nothing to do with the Revelation of Allah, such as the ancient Bedouin codes of honour. Their princes were to be obeyed and they thought that their traditions were more appropriate to their people than the Shari'ah revealed by Allah. This is disbelief. Many people have accepted Islam yet rule only by force of habit which, like an addiction, demands its own continued observance. If any of them come to realise that it is not permitted for them to rule by anything other than by what Allah has revealed, yet still refuse to do so, and endorse a rule that is against what Allah has revealed, then they are disbelievers.'[80]

In his commentary on the ayah:

By Allah, truly we were clearly wrong when we made you equal with the Lord of the Worlds. (26:97-98)

Ibn al-Qayim al-Jawziya says,

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[79] Madarij as-Salakin, 1/337.

[80] Majmu'at at-Tawhid, ch. 12.

'They were compared to Allah in terms of love, deference and obedience to their will, not in terms of creative dynamism, omnipotence or divinity. As for equality, it is as Allah says in the ayah:

> **Praise be to Allah, Who has created the heavens and the earth, and Who has appointed darkness and light. Yet those who disbelieve ascribe rivals to their Lord.** (6:1)

'This means that they set up others as equals or rivals to Him, loving them, serving them, and sanctifying them, as they should serve Allah and glorify Him. They do not believe that a human being is really equal to Allah in terms of actions or attributes, but they nevertheless ascribe to a human being these Divine characteristics. And while they do this, conferring upon a human being the same love, devotion, and reverence as they should to Allah, they also know that there is a difference between them and Allah. The answer to this paradox lies in the declaration of faith, "**There is no god but Allah**".'

Disbelief by Conviction

Our scholars have mentioned five categories of disbelief by conviction, rather than by action. These should clarify the status of someone who replaces the Shari'ah; they include denial, pride, evasion, doubt and hypocrisy.

First, disbelief by denial is the belief that the Messengers were liars. These people are actually rather few, since Allah always assisted His Messengers, granting them proofs and signs of their truthfulness that provided them with irrefutable evidence and deprived any whom they met of any excuse for denying them. Allah says of Pharaoh and his people:

> **And they denied them (Allah's signs), even though their selves acknowledged them, out of ignorance and arrogance.** (27:14)

And He said to His Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace:

> **In truth they do not deny you (O Muhammad), but wrongdoers flout the signs of Allah.** (6:33)

Second, disbelief through haughtiness and pride is like the disbelief of Satan and of those who knew the Messenger and never found fault with him, but

who turned away conceitedly. This is the most common type of disbelief amongst the enemies of the messengers; Allah says, relating the words of Pharaoh and his people:

> **Shall we put faith in two human beings like ourselves, and whose people are our slaves?** (23:47)

The disbelief of Abu Talib was also like this. He trusted the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and had no doubt as to his truthfulness, but was overcome by zeal for his clan, fearing to offend them by recognising the prophethood of his nephew.

Third, disbelief by evasion is to turn away from the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and his message. These people neither listen to him, nor believe him; they do not deny him, associate with him, oppose him, or pay the slightest attention to anything that he says at all. This is like the disbelief of one of the Bani Abd Yalil who told the Prophet, 'By God, I will just say this to you. If what you say is true you are the most noble person I would ever oppose, and if you are lying you are the most odious person I can imagine speaking with.'[81]

Fourth, disbelief through doubt is that which neither affirms nor denies the trustworthiness of the Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, but which raises some doubt about it. It is not possible to maintain this position for very long. Either people turn totally away from the clear signs of the truthfulness of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, or they turn to it and commit themselves to belief; but in either case doubt does not remain.

Fifth, disbelief through hypocrisy is when people say that they believe, while concealing denial in their hearts; this is the greatest form of hypocrisy.

Shirk, Hypocrisy and Apostasy

As for Shirk, it is of two types: greater, which takes one out of the community, and lesser, which does not. With regard to Greater Shirk, Allah says:

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[81] Muhammad Hamid al-Faqi notes here that many of those who call themselves by Muslim names and follow the Jews and the Christians, giving one another great respect and claiming in their ignorance and foolishness that the way to progress and civilisation is in modernisation and westernisation, are in this category of disbelief. Madarij as-Salakin, 1/228/ margins.

Surely Allah does not forgive it when partners are ascribed to Him. He forgives everything except this for whomever He wishes. (4:116)

Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab has explained that there are four kinds of Greater Shirk: these can occur when asking for help; in acts of devotion; when offering obedience; and in extending love towards something other than Allah, in a manner which should only be directed to Allah.

Allah speaks of supplication with these words:

And when they sail on ships they pray to Allah, making their faith pure for Him only; but when He brings them safe to land, then they ascribe partners (to Him). (29:65)

About the Shirk of those who devote themselves to something other than Allah, He says:

Whoever desires the life of the world and its attractions, We shall repay them for their actions in it, and in it they will not be wronged. These are they for whom there is nothing in the Hereafter except the Fire. Whatever they try in it is in vain and whatever they are used to doing is fruitless. (11:15-16)

Of those who associate a partner with Him when offering obedience, He says:

They have taken their rabbis and their monks as lords instead of Allah. (9:31)

Also, in the hadith related by Ibn Hatim who, when he heard the Prophet recite this verse asked, 'But did they really worship them?' the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, replied,

'Certainly they did, for they forbade them what was permitted and they permitted them what was forbidden, and in this they followed them; this is how they worshipped them.'[82]

As for the Shirk connected to love, Allah says:

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[82] Tirmidhi, Kitab at-Tafsir, 8/248, (3094); also Ibn Kathir, 4/77; al-Albani classifies it as hassan.

And from among mankind are some who take for themselves (objects of worship as) rivals to Allah, loving them as they should (only) love Allah. (2:165)[83]

Hypocrisy, too, may take a person out of the community. Ibn Taimiya explains this, saying, 'There is a Greater Hypocrisy, the likes of which will take you to the deepest pit of Hell, like the hypocrisy of Abdullah ibn Ubayy and others. It includes denial of the Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, rejection of some part of the Revelation, failure to believe in the obligation of obedience, joy at the setbacks of the Prophet's deen or displeasure at its successes, or some other element that can only mean enmity towards Allah and His Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace.[84]

Apostasy is a type of disbelief that comes after belief. This is the case of whoever declares disbelief and acts upon it, or takes pleasure in it willfully, even though he may be acting against his own heart. The ulama' have discussed this at length and have said that an apostate is the one who disbelieves after having previously submitted himself to Islam, whether by word, by deed, or by belief. They have established that whoever declares his disbelief is a disbeliever even if he has spoken without conviction, and does not act upon it. The only exception to this is someone who has been compelled against his will.

In the same way, if someone performs an act of disbelief, he too is a disbeliever, even if he acts without conviction and makes no declaration of disbelief. This is also true if disbelief arises in his heart and overwhelms and conquers him, even though he made no declaration of it and does not act upon it. This is quite clear from what has been written on the subject. Anyone who has any knowledge of the deen must have come across this at some time.[85]

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[83] Majmu' al-Fatawaa, 28/434

[84] Ibn Taimiyah, Majmu' al-Fatawaa, 28434.

[85] Ahmad ibn 'Atiq, ad-Difaa', p.28.

Chapter 9
What Negates Islam

A Summary of What the Ulama' Say

The ulama' have mentioned ten actions that negate Islam. These are:

First, associating other deities with the worship of the One God Who has no partners. Allah says:

> **Surely Allah does not forgive it when partners are ascribed to Him. He forgives everything except this for whomever He wishes.** (4:116)

Second, relying on an intermediary between oneself and Allah when seeking intercession.

Third, refusal to condemn the kufr of those who rely on other deities instead of Allah, or doubting that they are disbelievers, or approving of their religion, is itself disbelief.

Fourth, belief that there is a more perfect guidance than that of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, or that there is a form of governance that is preferable to this, such as someone who prefers the rule of tyrants to that of the Prophet.

Fifth, dislike of any part of the Revelation, even though one may act upon it, is disbelief. Allah says:

> **This is because they dislike what Allah has revealed, so He makes their actions fruitless.** (47:9)

Sixth, disparaging any part of the deen or any aspect of reward or punishment:

> **Say: Was it Allah and His signs and His Messenger that you ridiculed? Make no excuse. You have disbelieved after your belief.** (9:65-66)

Seventh, practising magic either black or white, is proof of disbelief:

> **And they did not teach it (magic) to anyone until they had said: 'Surely we are only a temptation, so do not disbelieve (in the guidance of Allah).'** (2:102)

Eighth, helping and assisting the disbelievers in overcoming the Muslims:

Whoever among you takes them for friends is surely (one) of them. Surely Allah does not guide wrongdoing people. (5:51)

Ninth, belief that it is not necessary to follow the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and that it is permitted to step outside the law of Allah, as al-Khidr did when he exceeded what had been revealed to Moses. This is disbelief.

Tenth, willful neglect of Allah's deen, neither learning it nor acting upon it. Allah says:

And who does greater wrong than he who is reminded of the signs of his Lord, and then turns away from them. Surely We shall requite the guilty. (32:22)

No distinction is made as regards these actions in terms of intention, whether a person is joking or serious or even acts out of fear. The only excuse is compulsion. These ten actions are extremely dangerous and exceedingly common. Every Muslim should beware of them and feel a real fear in his heart of even drawing near them.[86]

We will now take a closer look at two of these matters which are particularly relevant to our discussion, because of the significance and the proximity of the danger that they represent, and because this will clarify matters regarding political legitimacy, loyalty and opposition.

The first matter is the disbelief of someone who maintains that some other guidance is preferable to that of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, or that some system of governance other than that which he established is better.

Ruling by Other than What Allah has Revealed

The marginalisation of the Shari'ah, its disappearance from the mainstream of Islamic life and its replacement by laws formulated by ignorant humans is a modern heresy that has arisen during the last few centuries of the life of our Community. This has happened despite the fact that Muslim societies had for centuries sheltered under the protection of the Shari'ah, which provided for everyone's security, whether the governor or the governed. Although some

[86] Imam Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab, Mu'alafat , 5/212-214.

people were disobedient, some more than others, nevertheless the guiding principle, both in public and private life alike, was provided by the Shari'ah.

Similarly, the continuation of the Jihad, the pushing back of the frontiers of disbelief and the raising up of the Word of Allah throughout the world, carried on over and above this.

Thus the charge that the Shari'ah, that Islamic Law, is deficient, reactionary, and incompatible with progress in the modern world, is something that could not have been made until the rise of European colonialism and the resulting forgetfulness of the Muslims: they forgot Allah and so He made them forget their own souls.

We find, however, much guidance in the Qur'an and in the Sunnah that clearly speaks about the governance of the Community. This most surely constitutes a part of our belief, and is one of the most essential elements of our 'aqeedah. Allah says:

> **Whoever does not judge by what which Allah has revealed: such are disbelievers.** (5:44)

and:

> **Whoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed: such are wrongdoers.** (5:45)

and:

> **Whoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed: such are corrupt.** (5:47)

And He says:

> **Is it a judgement of the time of ignorance that they seek? And who is better than Allah for judgement for a people who have certainty (in their belief)?** (5:50)

and:

> **But no, by your Lord, they will not believe (truly) until they make you the judge of what is in dispute between them, and find within themselves no dislike of what you decide, and submit with full submission.** (4:65)

and:

Or have they partners (with Allah) who have made lawful for them in their religion what Allah has not allowed? (42:21)

And He says in Surat an-Nur:

And they say: 'We believe in Allah and in the Messenger, and we obey.' Then after that a group of them turn away. Such are not believers. And when they appeal to Allah and His Messenger to judge between them, then a group of them dislike it; but if they had been in the right then they would have come to him willingly. Is there a disease in their hearts, or do they have doubts, or are they afraid that Allah and His Messenger will wrong them in judgement? Certainly such are wrongdoers. Surely the saying of (all true) believers when they appeal to Allah and His Messenger to judge between them is only that they say: 'We hear and we obey.' And such are the successful. (24:47-51)

And He says in Surat an-Nisa:

And whoever opposes the Messenger after the guidance (of Allah) has been made clear to him, and follows other than the way of the believers, We appoint for him that to which he himself has turned, and expose him to Hell a wretched journey's end! (4:115)

Then Allah exposes the claims of those who say they are believers, but who prefer to be ruled by disbelievers:

Have you not seen those who pretend that they believe in what is revealed to you, and in what was revealed in the past, how they want to go for judgement (in their disputes) to false deities even though they have been ordered to reject them? Satan wishes to mislead them far astray. And when it is said to them: 'Come to what Allah has revealed and to the Messenger,' you see the hypocrites turn away from you in aversion. (4:60-61)

One of our ulama' summed this up nicely when he compared the person who wishes to substitute secular law for the Shari'ah to a beetle that loves the smell of urine and faeces but hates the fragrance of roses and musk.[87]

And He says:

> **Surely those who dispute with Allah and His Messenger will be among the most humiliated.** (58:20)

The worst form of dispute is to oppose Allah and His Messenger and to turn away from the Shari'ah of Allah, and the Sunnah of His Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. The humiliation that the Muslims are today experiencing throughout the world is only a natural consequence of their having abandoned the Shari'ah. Muslims today are numerous but they are like flotsam on a full tide. They have been seduced by the basest of nations and conquered by the most degenerate of people.

Indeed, the words of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, have come true: He said,

> **'"These nations will persistently beckon you, like food to a hungry man." Someone asked, "But who will be fewer then?" He replied, "Indeed in these days you will be many but you will be like flotsam and jetsam on the sea, for Allah will strip fear of you from the breasts of your enemies and He will cast faintheartedness into you." They said, "What is this faintheartedness?" He said, "Love of the world and a distaste for death."'**[88]

A large part of the imbalance in Muslim life today is due to the handiwork of men who, disguised as scholars, have persuaded people to substitute human speculation for the Shari'ah of Allah. Surely they will carry the full burden of their actions, and also that of those whom they have lead astray, until the Day of Resurrection. Islam will not be sullied by them. May Allah preserve the ulama' from among our rightly guided predecessors who guarded the gates of Islam so that none of its enemies could penetrate beyond them.

Ibn Kathir discusses the condition of the Muslim Nation in the days of the Tartars. Discussing in his Tafsir the ayah:

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[87] Abi Hibbatu'llah Isma'il al-Khateeb, Tahdheer Al alI-man 'an alHukm bighayri ma Anzala'r-Rahman, in Rasa'il al-Muniriya, 1139.

[88] Abu Baud, Kitab al-Malahim, 4/484. (4297); Mishkat al-Masabih; also alBaihaqi; al-Albani classifies it as sahih.

Is it a judgement of the time of ignorance that they seek??(5:50)

he says,

> 'The law of Allah encourages whatever is beneficial and discourages whatever is detrimental. Allah has rejected all who would depart from it, and who accept the views, opinions, and conventions determined by men without any support from the Shari'ah. This was done in the times of the Jahiliyya, when people ruled by chance and blind conjecture in accordance with their own views and opinions.
> 'So too do the Tartars rule, in accordance with their own royal policy, pronounced by their king Ginghis Khan, which they call the Yasaq. This Yasaq is a hotchpotch of all of the rules and systems that they have come across, taken from the Jews and the Christians and the Muslims, with many elements added which are based purely on their whims and fancies. This, they say, is the law of the land to which they give precedence, above the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet. Whoever amongst them does this is a disbeliever who must be opposed until he returns to the rule of Allah and His Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. Such a person should not rule even for a day.'[89]

Shaikh Muhammad ibn Ibrahim Al-ash-Shaykh outlines the ways in which a ruler may commit the greater disbelief that takes a person out of Islam:

> 'If the ruler who rules by other than the Revelation of Allah challenges the legal obligation to rule by the Shari'ah then he is outside Islam. This is the meaning of what has been reported by al-Tabari on the authority of Ibn Abbas, who said that there is no disagreement among the ulama' about someone who challenges the legitimacy of the Shari'ah; that this is a fundamental point about which everyone agrees; and that anyone who challenges a fundamental point of belief or even a secondary issue that all the ulama' are agreed about or who denies any part of the Revelation out of hand, is a disbeliever and is not a part of this Community.[90]

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[89] Ibn Kathir, Tafsir, 3/123.
[90] Tahkim alQawanin, p.5.

If such a ruler does not challenge the legitimacy of the Shari'ah, but believes that he rules by a better system of law than that which the Prophet observed, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, a system which in his opinion is more coherent and more suited to the needs of the people in the face of their changing needs and circumstances, then there can be no doubt that he too is a disbeliever. He has formulated a rule that can never compete with that of Allah. There is no issue whatsoever whose answer is not contained in the text of the Qur'an and the Sunnah, either explicitly or implicitly; whether or not a person knows this is a different matter.

If a ruler does not believe that what he has is better than the Shari'ah, but still thinks that it is at least equal to it, then he is like the others. This is disbelief that takes him out of the community, because it seeks to equate a creature with his Creator. This is also true of someone who believes that a ruler has a right to deviate from the Shari'ah in the way that the three types of rulers outlined above do.

It is even worse still when a person stubbornly supports his own rule in opposition to that of Allah and His Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, aggrandizing it at the expense of the Shari'ah. This is what modern secular rulers do, whose recourse is to French, British and American law, or to whatever else they please to choose from non-Muslim systems. What could be greater disbelief than this? What could be more excessive than this in contradicting the declaration of faith, 'There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger'?[91]

Finally, there is the disbelief of many of the chieftains of the tribes and the clans of the Bedouins and others like them who cling to the tales of their ancestors, to their habits and their traditions. These form a kind of inherited common law by which they rule themselves in preference to, and in spite of, the revealed law of Allah.

Then there is the type of disbelief that does not take one out of the community, and which Ibn Abbas termed 'a disbelief less than disbelief. Thus someone who is overcome by his own desires in a particular situation may act contrary to the Shari'ah, and yet still be aware that he is acting wrongly. He may later reproach himself for his error and failure to follow the guidance of Allah. Even though this action does not take him out of the community, it is still a very great sin, greater than fornication or

[91] ibid. p.7.

drinking or theft. Allah has called this 'disbelief, so it is more grave than other wrong actions which have not been described in this fashion.[92]

It is because of the significance and importance of the matter that we have examined the subject of governance in detail. To ally oneself with a ruler who does not rule by what Allah has revealed, to approve of his rule and the implementation of legislation under his authority - saying this is lawful, that is unlawful, without the permission of Allah is a contradiction of the declaration of faith. Allah is the only God, to whom all devotion from the heart is due, in love, and in awe, and in obedience, and in submission.

Such behaviour is a contradiction of the statement, 'Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah', may Allah bless him and grant him peace, since whoever truly believes this will follow what the Messenger has commanded and leave what he has forbidden and what he has criticised. If people only understood this fact then tyranny could not persist, nor could it establish disbelief and push the Shari'ah of Allah to one side. The second matter that should be considered in this context is the helping and assisting of the disbelievers against the Muslims.

Helping the Disbelievers against the Muslims

Allah says:

And whoever of you takes them for friends is (one) of them. Surely Allah does not guide wrongdoing people. (5:51)

This is a major contradiction of the declaration of faith into which many people today have fallen. They are nominally Muslims and still apparently within the fold of the faithful. And yet, we have come to feel a certain embarrassment when it comes to calling a spade a spade, to saying to the supporters of kufr, 'You are disbelievers!'

Some people even see this as impertinence in view of the wonder and awe, and the fear and anxiety that they feel for the enemies of Allah. And so the matter of setting the pace, of setting an example, has given way under the weight of their feebleness of faith. They are dazzled by the enemies of Allah and long to be like them, even to the point that if they entered the den of a wolf they would follow them into it.

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[92] ibid

Chapter 10
Conclusion

From whatever perspective you look, the picture is the same. From the leanings of the heart, to the imitation of the disbelievers' godless ways, to the adoption of their laws, to the exposing of our own shame to them, almost every aspect of our lives is subjected to the disbelievers in some way or another.

An awareness of the true nature of our belief and its antithesis is accordingly of vital importance, for this alone will make us watchful over our own behaviour, which must be based upon what the Shari'ah requires, and not upon other people's fantasies and desires.

You must ally yourself only to Allah, and to His Messenger, and to the believers, and you must cut yourself off from whoever or whatever else demands to be followed, desired or feared and turns you away from Allah and His Messenger, may the blessings and peace of Allah be on him and on his family and on his companions and on all who follow him and them in what they are able, with sincerity, until the Last Day.

Glossary of Arabic Terms

Allah ta'Ala: Allah, the Most High, the Lord of all the worlds. Allah, the supreme and mighty Name, indicates the One, the Existent, the Creator, the Worshipped, the Lord of the Universe. Allah is the First without beginning and the Last without end and the Outwardly Manifest and the Inwardly Hidden.

ahlu'l-sunnah wa'1-jama'a: the people who follow the sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and who hold together as a community on that basis.

'alim: a man of knowledge from amongst the Muslims who acts on what he knows

'aqeedah: belief or faith firmly based on how things are, rather than on how they may be imagined. Thus 'aqeedah can only fully be derived from an original revelation from Allah and from the sayings of the Messenger to whom it was revealed: in this age, the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace

ayah: a sign, a verse of the Qur'an.

ayat: the plural of ayah.

bara': withdrawing from and opposing all that is displeasing to Allah and His Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace.

bid'a: innovation, changing the original teaching of the Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, in a

deen: the life-transaction, submission and obedience to a particular system of rules and practices, a debt of exchange between two parties, in this usage between the Creator and the created. Allah says in the Qur'an: Surely the deen with Allah is Islam. (3.19).

faqih: a scholar of fiqh who by virtue of his knowledge can give an authoritative opinion or judgement

fiqh: Islamic jurisprudence, the science of the application of the shar

fisq: corruption.

fuqaha: the plural of faqih.

hadith: reported speech, particularly of, or about, the Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace.

hadith qudsi: those words of Allah on the tongue of His Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, which are not part of the Revelation of the Qur'an

hajj: the annual pilgrimage to Makka which every Muslim who has the means and ability must make once in his or her life-time; the performance of the rites of the hajj in the protected area which surrounds the Ka'aba. The hajj is one of the indispensable pillars of Islam.

halal: permitted by the shari'ah.

haram: forbidden by the shari'ah; also a protected area, an inviolable place or object

hasan: good; a category of hadith which is reliable, but which is not as well authenticated as one which is sahih.

hijrah: emigration in the way of Allah. Islam takes its dating from the hijrah of the Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, from Makka to Madina, in 622 A.

ihsan: the state of being hasan; being absolutely sincere to Allah in oneself; it is to worship Allah as though you see Him, knowing that although you do not see Him, He sees you.

imam: the one who leads the prayer, an eminent scholar.

iman: acceptance, belief, trust, in Allah, a gift from Him. Iman is to believe in Allah, His angels, His revealed Books, His messengers, the Last Day, the Garden and the Fire, and that everything is by the Decree of Allah, both the good and the evil.

Islam: peace and submission to the will of Allah, the way of life embodied by all the prophets, given its final form in the prophetic guidance brought by the Prophet Muhammad, may the blessings and peace of Allah be on him. The five pillars of Islam are the affirmation of the shahada, doing the salat, paying the zakat, fasting the month of Ramadan, and doing the hajj once in a life-time if you are able.

isnad: the written record of the names of the people who form the chain of human transmission, person to person, by means of which a hadith is preserved. One of the sciences of the Muslims which was developed after the Prophet Muhammad's death, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, is the science of assessing the authenticity of a hadith by assessing the reliability of its isnad.

jahiliyyah: the time of ignorance, before the coming of Islam.

jihad: struggle, particularly warfare, to establish and defend Islam. Inwardly, the jihad is to oppose whatever in your self is displeasing to Allah. Outwardly, it is oppose kufr by word and action.

jinn: unseen beings created from smokeless fire who co-habit the earth together with mankind

Ka'aba: the cube-shaped building at the centre of the Haram in Makka, originally built by the Prophet Ibrahim, peace be on him, and rebuilt with the help of the Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace; also known as the House of Allah. The Ka'aba is the focal point which all Muslims face when doing the salat. This does not mean that Allah lives inside the Ka'aba, nor does it mean that the Muslims worship the Ka'aba. It is Allah Who is

worshipped and Allah is not contained or confined in any form or place or time or concept.

kafir: a person who commits kufr, the opposite of a mumin.

kaflrun: the plural of kafir.

kalima: the declaration: There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah

kufr: to cover up the truth, to reject Allah and His Messenger, may the blessings and peace of Allah be on him.

la ilaha illa'llah: there is no god but Allah.

makruh: disapproved of, without being forbidden, by the shari'ah.

marfu': a hadith from a companion of the Prophet Muhammad containing words attributed to the Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace.

Muhammad ar-Rasulu'llah: Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, may the blessings and peace of Allah be on h

muhsin: someone who possesses the quality of ih-san, who remembers Allah constantly.

mumin: someone who possesses the quality of iman, who trusts in Allah and accepts His Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace.

muminun: the plural of mumin.

munafiq: a hypocrite; the hypocrites amongst the Muslims outwardly profess Islam on the tongue, but inwardly reject Allah and His Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, siding with the kafirun against the Muslims. The deepest part of the Fire is reserved for the munafiqun

munafiqun: the plural of munafiq.

mushrik: one who commits shirk.

mushrikeen: the plural of mushrik.

muslim: someone who follows the way of Islam, doing what is obligatory, avoiding what is forbidden, keeping within the limits prescribed by Allah, and following the sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, in what he or she is able. A Muslim is, by definition, one who is safe and sound, at peace in this world, and promised the Garden in the next world.

nifaq: hypocrisy.

qadi: a judge.

qiblah: the direction faced in prayer, which, for the Muslims, is towards the Ka'aba in Makka. Everyone has a direction in life, but only the Muslims have this qibla

Qur'an: the 'Recitation', the last Revelation from Allah to mankind and the jinn before the end of the world, revealed to the Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, through the angel Jibril, over a period of twenty-

three years, the first thirteen of which were spent in Makka and the last ten of which were spent in Madina. The Qur'an amends, encompasses, expands, surpasses and abrogates all the earlier revelations revealed to the earlier messengers, peace be on all of them. The Qur'an is the greatest miracle given to the Prophet Muhammad by Allah, for he was illiterate and could neither read nor write. The Qur'an is the uncreated word of Allah. The Qur'an still exists today exactly as it was originally revealed, without any alteration or change or addition or deletion. Whoever recites the Qur'an with courtesy and sincerity receives knowledge and wisdom, for it is the well of wisdom in this age.

rak'a: a unit of the prayer, a complete series of standing, bowing, prostrations and sitting

rak'at: the plural of rak'a.

Ramadan: the month of fasting, the ninth month in the Muslim lunar calendar, during which all adult Muslims who are in good health fast from the first light of dawn until sunset each day. The Qur'an was first revealed in the month of Ramadan. The fast of Ramadan is one of the indispensable pillars of Islam.

sahaba: companions, particularly the com-panions of the Prophet Muhammad, may the blessings and peace of Allah be on him and on his family and on his companion

sahih: healthy and sound with no defects; often used to describe a fully authenticated hadith. The two most reliable collections of hadith by Imam Al-Bukhari and Imam Muslim are both described as saheeh

salafi: adjective from as-salaf, 'the early years', and used generally to describe the early generations of the Muslims, particularly the sahaba, the companions of the Messenger of Allah, may the blessings and peace of Allah be on him and on his family and on his companions. In the present age the term is sometimes used to describe those Muslims who closely follow the sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad.

salat: the prayer, particularly the five daily obligatory ritual prayers of the Muslims which are called maghrib, 'isha, fajr, dhur and 'asr. They consist of fixed numbers of rak'at in worship to Allah. Salat is one of the indispensable pillars

sawm: fasting, particularly the fast of Ramadan, from food and drink and making love if you are married during daylight, from the first light of dawn until sunset.

shahada: to witness, to bear witness that: There is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. The shahada is the gateway to Islam and the gateway to the Garden in the next world. It is easy to say, but to act on it is a vast undertaking which has far-reaching consequences, both in inward awareness and in outward action, both in

this world and in the next world. Continual affirmation of the shahada is one of the indispensable pillars of Islam.

shari'ah: a road, the legal and social modality of a people based on the revelation of their prophet. The last shari'ah in history is that of Islam. It abrogates all previous shari'ahs. It is, being the last, therefore the easiest to follow, for it is applicable to the whole human race wherever they are.

shaytan: a devil, particularly Iblis (Satan), an evil jinn who prompts mankind and the jinn to rebel against Allah. Shaytan is part of the creation of Allah, and we seek refuge in Allah from the evil that He has created

shirk: the unforgivable wrong action of worshipping something or someone other than Allah or associating something or someone as a partner with Him; the opposite of Tawheed which is affirmation of Divine Unity. Shirk is idol-worship, which is attributing form to Allah by attempting to confine Him within an object, a concept, a ritual or a myth whereas Allah is not like anything and has no form. He cannot be conceived of or perceived.

sirah: the historical study of the Prophet Muhammad's life, may the blessings and peace of Allah be on

sunnah: a form, the customary practice of a person or group of people. It has come to refer almost exclusively to the practice of the Messenger of Allah, Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, but also comprises the customs of the first generation of Muslims in Madina, who acted in accordance with what they had learned from him and who transmitted what they had learned to the next generation. The sunnah is a complete behavioral science that has been systematically kept outside the learning framework of this society, but which nevertheless has been preserved by those to whom it has been transmitted and who continue to embody it as their way of life. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said: T have left two matters with you. As long as you hold to them, you will not go the wrong way. They are the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet.' (Al-Muwatta of Imam Malik, 46.1.3)

tafsir: commentary on the Qur'an.

taqwa: being careful, knowing your place in the cosmos. Its proof is the experience of awe of Allah, which inspires a person to be on guard against wrong action and eager for actions which are pleasing to Him.

tawaf: circling the Ka'aba; tawaf is done in sets of seven circuits followed by two rak'at of prayer

tawba: returning to correct action after error, turning away from wrong action to Allah and asking His Forgiveness, turning to face the Real whereas before one turned one's back

Tawheed: the Divine Unity, Unity in its most profound sense. Allah is One in His Essence and His Attributes and His Acts. The whole of the creation

and what it contains is one unified event which in itself has no lasting reality. Allah is the Real: Surely we come from Allah and surely to Him we return. (2.156

'**ulama:** the plural of 'alim.

Ummah: the body of the Muslims as one distinct and integrated community or nation.

wala': loyalty, holding fast to all that is pleasing to Allah and His Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. Whoever possesses al-wala' wa'l-bara' loves with the love of Allah and hates with the hate of All

zakat: the wealth tax obligatory on Muslims each year, usually payable in the form of one fortieth of surplus wealth which is more than a certain fixed minimum amount, which is called the nisab. Zakat is payable on accumulated wealth, especially gold and silver, merchandise, certain crops, certain livestock, and on subterranean and mineral wealth. As soon as it is collected it is redistributed to those in need, as defined in the Qur'an and the hadith. Zakat is one of the indispensable pillars of Islam.

zakat al-fitr: a small obligatory head-tax imposed on every responsible Muslim who has the means for himself and his dependants. It is paid once yearly at the end of Ramadan just before the 'Id al-Fitr, the festival that marks the end of Ramadan.